

the members debated on how their illustrious prisoner should be received. Barère, the President, said, "Citizens of the tribunes, Louis is at the bar. You are about to give a great lesson to kings, a great and useful example to nations. Bethink you of the silence that accompanied Louis from Varennes—a silence that was the precursor of the judgment of kings by the people." "Let the silence of the grave affright the guilty,"<sup>1</sup> exclaimed Légendie. "As the Convention is not condemned to attend to-day to nothing but a King," said Manuel, "I think it would be proper to employ ourselves on some important business, even though we should make Louis wait when he arrives."<sup>2</sup> His motion was adopted, and a discussion began on a law concerning the emigrants.

It was about half-past two when the King appeared at the bar. The Mayor and Generals Santerre and Wittengoff were at his side. Profound silence pervaded the Assembly. All were touched by the King's dignity and the composure of his looks under so great a reverse of fortune. By nature he had been formed rather to endure calamity with patience than to contend against it with energy. The approach of death could not disturb his serenity.

"Louis, you may be seated," said Barère. "Answer the questions that shall be put to you." The King seated himself and listened to the reading of the *acte énonciatif*, article by article.<sup>3</sup> All the faults of the Court were there enumerated and imputed to Louis XVI. personally. He was charged with the interruption of the sittings of the 20th of June 1789, with the Bed of Justice held on the 23d of the same month, the aristocratic conspiracy thwarted by the insurrection of the 14th of July, the entertainment of the life-guards, the insults offered to the national cockade; the refusal to sanction the declaration of rights,

<sup>1</sup> See Lamartine's *History of the Girondists*, English edit. 1870, vol. ii. pp. 309, 310.

<sup>2</sup> Bertrand de Molleville's *Annals*, English edit. 1802, vol. viii. p. 243.

<sup>3</sup> The King sat down with an intrepid air; no signs of emotion appeared on his countenance. The dignity and calmness of his presence were such that the Girondists were melted to tears, and the fanaticism of Saint Just, Robespierre, and Marat for a moment yielded to the feelings of humanity.—Alison.

as well as several constitutional articles ; lastly, all the facts which indicated a new conspiracy in October, and which were followed by the scenes of the 5th and 6th ; the speeches of reconciliation which had succeeded all these scenes, and which promised a change that was not sincere ; the false oath taken at the Federation of the 14th of July ; the secret practices of Talon and Mirabeau to effect a counter-revolution ; the money spent in bribing a great number of deputies ; the assemblage of the "knights of the dagger" on the 28th of February 1791 ; the flight to Varennes ; the fusillade of the Champ de Mars ; the silence observed respecting the treaty of Pilnitz ; the delay in the promulgation of the decree which incorporated Avignon with France ; the commotions at Nîmes, Montauban, Mende, and Jalès ; the continuance of their pay to the emigrant life-guards and to the disbanded constitutional guard ; the insufficiency of the armies assembled on the frontiers ; the refusal to sanction the decree for the camp of twenty thousand men ; the disarming of the fortresses ; the organisation of secret societies in the interior of Paris ; the review of the Swiss and the garrison of the Palace on the 10th August ; the summoning the Mayor to the Tuileries ; and lastly, the effusion of blood which had resulted from these military dispositions. After each article the President paused, and said, "What have you to answer ?" The King, in a firm voice, denied some of the facts, imputed others to his ministers, and always appealed to the constitution, from which he declared he had never deviated.<sup>1</sup> His answers were very temperate, but on the charge—"You spilt the blood of the people on the 10th of August," he exclaimed with emphasis, "No, sir, no ; it was not I."<sup>2</sup>

All the papers on which the act of accusation was founded were then shown to the King, and he disavowed some of them and disputed the existence of the iron chest ; this produced a

<sup>1</sup> The King listened unmoved to the act of accusation, only at one or two passages, where it passed the bounds of even injustice and falsehood, and where he was reproached with shedding the blood of the people, which he had so religiously spared during his reign, he could not prevent himself from betraying his indignation by a bitter smile and a shrug of his shoulders. It was evident that he expected everything but to be called a sanguinary Prince. He lifted his eyes to heaven as though invoking God to witness his innocence.—Lamartine's *History of the Girondists*, edit. 1870, vol. ii. p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> Thiers' *French Revolution*, edit. 1854, vol. ii. pp. 198-200.

bad impression, and was worse than useless, as the fact had been proved.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the examination the King showed great presence of mind. He was careful in his answers never to implicate any members of the constituent and legislative Assemblies; many who then sat as his judges trembled lest he should betray them. The Jacobins beheld with dismay the profound impression made on the Convention by the firm but mild demeanour of the sovereign. The most violent of the party proposed that he should be hung that very night; a laugh as of demons followed the proposal from the benches of the Mountain, but the majority, composed of the Girondists and the neutrals, decided that he should be formally tried.<sup>2</sup>

After the examination Santerre took the King by the arm and led him back to the waiting-room of the Convention, accompanied by Chambon and Chaumette. Mental agitation and the length of the proceedings had exhausted him, and he staggered from weakness. Chaumette inquired if he wished for refreshment, but the King refused it. A moment after, seeing a grenadier of the escort offer the Procureur de la Commune half a small loaf, Louis XVI. approached and asked him, in a whisper, for a piece. "Ask aloud for what you want," said Chaumette, retreating as though he feared being suspected of pity. "I ask for a piece of your bread," replied the King. "Divide it with me," said Chaumette. "It is a Spartan breakfast. If I had a root I would give you half."<sup>3</sup>

Soon after six in the evening the King returned to the Temple. "He seemed tired," says Cléry simply, "and his first wish was to be led to his family. The officers refused, on the plea that

<sup>1</sup> A secret closet which the King had directed to be constructed in a wall in the Tuileries. The door was of iron, whence it was afterwards known by the name of the *iron chest*. The workman employed to construct it gave information to Roland, who, being anxious to ascertain the truth of the statement, had the imprudence to hasten to the spot unaccompanied by witnesses selected from the Assembly, which gave his enemies occasion to assert that he had abstracted some of the papers. One important document the Jacobins turned into an implement against the Girondists. It was an overture from that party to Louis XVI., shortly before the 10th of August, engaging to oppose the motion for his forfeiture, provided he would recall to his councils the three discarded ministers of the Girondist party.—See *Thiers* and *Scott*.

<sup>2</sup> Alison's *History of Europe*, 10th edit., vol. ii. p. 301.

<sup>3</sup> Léon Martine's *History of the Girondists*, edit. 1870, vol. ii. p. 313.

they had no orders. He insisted that at least they should be informed of his return, and this was promised him. The King ordered me to ask for his supper at half-past eight. The intervening hours he employed in his usual reading, surrounded by four municipals. When I announced that supper was served, the King asked the commissioners if his family could not come down. They made no reply. ‘But at least,’ the King said, ‘my son will pass the night in my room, his bed being here?’ The same silence. After supper the King again urged his wish to see his family. They answered that they must await the decision of the Convention. While I was undressing him the King said, ‘I was far from expecting all the questions they put to me.’ He lay down with perfect calmness. The order for my removal during the night was not executed.” On the King’s return to the Temple being known, “my mother asked to see him instantly,” writes Madame Royale. “She made the same request even to Chambon, but received no answer. My brother passed the night with her ; and as he had no bed, she gave him hers, and sat up all the night in such deep affliction that we were afraid to leave her ; but she compelled my aunt and me to go to bed. Next day she again asked to see my father, and to read the newspapers, that she might learn the course of the trial. She entreated that if she was to be denied this indulgence, his children, at least, might see him. Her requests were referred to the Commune. The newspapers were refused ; but my brother and I were to be allowed to see my father on condition of being *entirely separated from my mother*. My father replied that, great as his happiness was in seeing his children, the important business which then occupied him would not allow of his attending altogether to his son, and that his daughter could not leave her mother.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The substance of the decree as to the King’s intercourse with his family was as follows :—“That the Queen and Madame Elizabeth should not communicate with the King at all during the course of the trial ; that his children should come to him if he wished, on condition that they should not see their mother nor their aunt again until after the last examination. ‘You see,’ said the King, ‘the cruel alternative in which they have just placed me. I cannot make up my mind to have my children with me. As to my daughter, it is impossible ; and as to my son, I know by myself the pain the Queen would feel. I must therefore submit to this fresh sacrifice.’ His Majesty ordered me to take away the young Prince’s bed ; but I kept his linen and clothes, and

The Assembly having, after a violent debate, resolved that Louis XVI. should have the aid of counsel, a deputation was sent to the Temple to ask whom he would choose. The King named MM. Target and Tronchet : the former refused his services on the ground that he had discontinued practice since 1785 ; the latter complied at once with the King's request ; and while the Assembly was considering who to nominate in Target's place, the President received a letter from the venerable Malesherbes,<sup>1</sup> then seventy years old, and "the most respected magistrate in France," in the course of which he said, "I have been twice called to be counsel for him who was my master, in times when that duty was coveted by every one. I owe him the same service now that it is a duty which many people deem dangerous. If I knew any possible means of acquainting him with my desires, I should not take the liberty of addressing myself to you." Other citizens made similar proposals, but the King, being made acquainted with them by a deputation from the Commune, while expressing his gratitude for all the offers, only accepted that of Malesherbes.<sup>2</sup>

On 14th December M. Tronchet was allowed to confer with the King, and later in the same day M. de Malesherbes was admitted to the Tower. "The King ran up to this worthy old man,

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every other day sent what was necessary, as I had agreed with Madame Elizabeth."—Clery's *Journal*. During their last interview Madame Elizabeth had given Clery one of her handkerchiefs, saying, "You shall keep it so long as my brother continues well ; if he becomes ill, send it to me among my nephew's things."

<sup>1</sup> Christian Guillaume de Lamoignon de Malesherbes, an eminent French statesman, son of the Chancellor of France, was born at Paris in 1721. In 1750 he succeeded his father as President of the Court of Aids, and was also made superintendent of the press. On the banishment of the Parliaments and the suppression of the Court of Aids, Malesherbes was exiled to his country-seat. In 1775 he was appointed Minister of State. On the decree of the Convention for the King's trial, he emerged from his retreat to become the voluntary advocate of his sovereign. Malesherbes was guillotined in 1794, and almost his whole family were extirpated by their merciless persecutors.—*Encyclopædia Americana*.

<sup>2</sup> The Citoyenne Olympia Degouges, calling herself a *free and loyal Republican without spot or blame*, and declaring that the cold and selfish cruelty of Target had inflamed her heroism and roused her sensibility, asked permission to assist M. de Malesherbes in defending the King. The Assembly passed to the order of the day on this request.—Bertrand de Molleville's *Annals*, edit. 1802, vol. viii. p. 254.

whom he clasped in his arms," says Clery, "and the former minister melted into tears at the sight of his master."<sup>1</sup> Another deputation brought the King the Act of Accusation and the documents relating to it, numbering more than a hundred, and taking from four o'clock till midnight to read. During this long process the King had refreshments served to the deputies, taking nothing himself till they had left, but considerably reproofing Clery for not having supped. From the 14th to the 26th December the King saw his counsel and their colleague M. de Sèze every day. At this time a means of communication between the royal family and the King was devised; a man named Turgi, who had been in the royal kitchen, and who contrived to obtain employment in the Temple, when conveying the meals of the royal family to their apartments, or articles he had purchased for them, managed to give Madame Elizabeth news of the King. Next day the Princess, when Turgi was removing the dinner, slipped into his hand a bit of paper on which she had pricked with a pin a request for a word from her brother's own hand. Turgi gave this paper to Clery, who conveyed it to the King the same evening; and he, being allowed writing materials while preparing his defence, wrote Madame Elizabeth a short note. An answer was conveyed in a ball of cotton, which Turgi threw under Clery's bed while passing the door of his room. Letters were also passed between the Princess' room and that of Clery, who lodged beneath her, by means of a string let down and drawn up at night. This communication with his family was a great comfort to the King, who nevertheless constantly cautioned his faithful servant. "Take care," he would say kindly, "you expose yourself too much."<sup>2</sup>

During his separation from his family the King refused to go

<sup>1</sup> According to M. de Huë, "The first time M. de Malesherbes entered the Temple the King clasped him in his arms and said, 'Ah, is it you, my friend? You fear not to endanger your own life to save mine; but all will be useless. They will bring me to the scaffold. No matter; I shall gain my cause if I leave an unspotted memory behind me.'"

<sup>2</sup> The King's natural benevolence was constantly shown while in the Temple. His own dreadful position never prevented him from sympathy with the smaller troubles of others. A servant in the Temple named Marchand, the father of a family, was robbed of two hundred francs—his wages for two months. The King observed his distress, asked its cause, and gave Clery the amount to be handed to Marchand, with a caution not to speak of it to any one, and, above all, not to thank the King, lest it should injure him with his employers.

into the garden. When it was proposed to him he said, "I cannot make up my mind to go out alone; the walk was agreeable to me only when I shared it with my family." But he did not allow himself to dwell on painful reflections. He talked freely to the municipals on guard, and surprised them by his varied and practical knowledge of their trades, and his interest in their domestic affairs. On the 19th December the King's breakfast was served as usual; but, being a fast-day, he refused to take anything. At dinner-time the King said to Clery, "Fourteen years ago you were up earlier than you were to-day; it is the day my daughter was born—to-day, her birthday," he repeated with tears, "and to be prevented from seeing her!" Madame Royale had wished for a calendar; the King ordered Clery to buy her the *Almanac of the Republic*, which had replaced the *Court Almanac*, and ran through it, marking with a pencil many names.

"On Christmas Day," says Clery, "the King wrote his will.<sup>1</sup> I read and copied it at the time, when it was given to the council." It was as follows:—

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF HIS MOST CHRISTIAN  
MAJESTY.

"In the name of the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: This day, December 25, 1792, I, Louis XVI., King of France, having been for more than four months shut up with my family in the Tower of the Temple at Paris by those who were my subjects, and deprived of every kind of communication with my family since the 11th of this month; and being moreover involved in a trial, of which, from the passions of mankind, it is impossible to foresee the event, and for which neither pretext nor precedent can be found in any existing law; having no witness of my thoughts but God, and no one but Him to whom I can address myself, I here declare in His presence, my last Will and sentiments.

"I leave my soul to God, my Creator: I implore Him to

<sup>1</sup> Madame Royale says: "On the 26th December, St. Stephen's Day, my father made his will, because he expected to be assassinated that day on his way to the bar of the Convention. He went thither, nevertheless, with his usual calmness."—*Royal Memoirs*, p. 195.

receive it in His mercy, and not to judge it according to its merits but according to those of our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered Himself as a sacrifice to God, His Father, for us men, unworthy as we were, and especially myself. I die in the communion of our Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Mother Church, which holds its powers by an uninterrupted succession from St. Peter, to whom Jesus Christ had entrusted them. I firmly believe, and I confess, all that is contained in the commandments of God and the Church—in the sacraments and mysteries which the Church teaches and has always taught. I have never presumed to make myself a judge as to the different manners of explaining the doctrines which divide the Church of Jesus Christ; but I have always referred myself, and shall always refer myself, if God shall grant me life, to the decisions which the superior ecclesiastics give, and shall give conformably to the discipline of the Church followed since Jesus Christ. I lament with my whole heart for our brethren who may be in error, but I do not presume to judge them; and I do not the less love them in Jesus Christ agreeably to what Christian charity teaches us.

“I implore God to pardon me all my sins. I have endeavoured scrupulously to know them, to detest them, and to humble myself in His presence.

“Not having it in my power to avail myself of the ministry of a Catholic Priest, I implore God to receive the confession I have made to Him; and, above all, my profound repentance for having put my name (although it was contrary to my will) to those acts which may be contrary to the discipline and the belief of the Catholic Church, to which I have always remained sincerely united in my heart. I implore God to receive the firm resolution I entertain, should He grant me life, to avail myself, as soon as it shall be in my power, of the ministry of a Catholic Priest, to accuse myself of all my sins, and to receive the sacrament of penitence.

“I beseech all those whom by inadvertence I may have offended (for I do not recollect ever knowingly to have committed an offence against any one), or those to whom I may have given a bad example, or occasion for scandal, to pardon me the evil which they think I may have done them.

“I beseech all those who have charity to unite their prayers to my own, to obtain from God the pardon of my sins.

"I pardon with my whole heart those who have made themselves my enemies, without my having given them any cause ; and I pray to God that he will pardon them, as well as those who, by a false zeal, or by a zeal ill understood, have done me much evil.

"I recommend to God my wife, my children, my sister, my aunts, my brother, and all those who are attached to me by the ties of blood, or in any other manner whatsoever.

"I especially implore God to cast the eyes of His mercy upon my wife, my children, and my sister, who have for so long a time suffered with me, to support them by His grace, should they happen to lose me, so long as they shall remain in this perishable world.

"I recommend my children to my wife ; I have never doubted of her maternal tenderness for them. I recommend her to make them good Christians and honest ; to induce them to consider the grandeurs of this world (should they be condemned to make trial of them) as no other than dangerous and perishable possessions ; and to turn their view to the only solid and durable glory of eternity.

"I beseech my sister to be pleased to continue her tenderness to my children, and to supply to them the place of a mother, should they have the misfortune to lose their own.

"I beseech my wife to forgive me all those evils which she suffers for me, and the uneasiness which I may have given her in the course of our union ; as she may be assured that I retain nothing in my mind respecting her, should she imagine that she has any reason to reproach herself with respect to me.

"I earnestly recommend to my children, after what they owe to God, which they ought to consider as prior to everything else, to remain always united among themselves, submissive and obedient to their mother, and grateful to her for all the pains she takes for them, and in memory of me.

"I beseech them to consider my sister as a second mother. I recommend to my son, should he have the misfortune to become a King, to reflect that he owes himself entirely to the happiness of his fellow-citizens, that he ought to forget all hatred and resentment, and especially all which has a reference to the misfortunes and miseries which I experience ; that he cannot effect

the happiness of his people but by reigning according to the laws ; that, at the same time, a king cannot make those respected or do the good which is in his heart unless he possess the necessary authority ; and that otherwise being confined in his operations, and commanding no respect, he is more hurtful than useful.

" I recommend to my son to take care of all those persons who havé been attached to me, as far as the circumstances in which he may find himself shall give him an opportunity ; to reflect that this is a sacred debt which I have contracted towards the children, or the relations of those who have perished for my sake, and towards those who have become miserable on my account.

" I know there are several persons in the number of those who were attached to me who have not behaved towards me as they ought to have done, and who have even shown ingratitude towards me ; but I forgive them (for in the moments of trouble and effervescence one is not always master of one's self) ; and I beseech my son, should he find an opportunity, to reflect only on their misfortunes. I wish I could here testify my thankfulness to those who have manifested towards me a true and disinterested attachment. On the one hand, if I have been sensibly affected by the ingratitude and disloyalty of those to whom I have never acted but with kindness, as well to themselves as to their relations and friends ; on the other, I have had the consolation to see the voluntary attachment and interest which many persons have shown me. I beseech them to receive all my thanks for this. In the situation in which things yet are I should fear to commit them were I to speak more explicitly ; but I especially recommend to my son to seek opportunity of being able to acknowledge them.

" I should, however, conceive that I calumniated the sentiments of the nation were I not openly to recommend to my son MM. de Chamilly and de Huë, whose sincere attachment to me has induced them to shut themselves up with me in this sorrowful abode, and who have been in danger of becoming the unhappy victims of that attachment. I also recommend to him Clery, with whose attention I have every reason to be satisfied since he has been with me to the end. I beseech MM. de la Commune to deliver to him my effects, my books, my watch, and the other

little articles of my property which have been deposited with the Conseil de Commune.

"I moreover fully pardon those who have imprisoned me, the ill-treatment and harshness which they have thought it their duty to use towards me. I have found some feeling and compassionate souls. May these enjoy in their hearts that tranquillity to which their mode of thinking should entitle them !

"I beseech MM. de Malesherbes, Tronchet, and de Sèze to receive here my utmost thanks, and the expression of my sensibility for all the pains and trouble they have been at on my account. I conclude, by declaring before God, and being ready to appear before Him, that I do not reproach myself with any of those crimes which have been charged against me.

"This instrument made in duplicate at the Tower of the Temple, the 25th of December 1792.

(Signed) LOUIS.

(Inscribed) BAUDRAIS,  
*Municipal Officer.*"

On the 26th December 1792 the King appeared a second time before the Convention. M. de Sèze, labouring night and day, had completed his defence. The King insisted on excluding from it all that was too rhetorical, and confining it to the mere discussion of essential points.<sup>1</sup> At half-past nine in the morning the whole armed force was in motion to conduct him from the Temple to the Feuillans, with the same precautions and in the same order as had been observed on the former occasion. Riding in the carriage of the Mayor, he conversed, on the way, with the same composure as usual, and talked of Seneca, of Livy, of the hospitals. Arrived at the Feuillans, he showed great anxiety for his defenders ; he seated himself beside them in the Assembly, surveyed with great composure the benches where his accusers and his judges sat, seemed to examine their faces with the view of discovering the impression produced by the pleading of M. de Sèze, and more

<sup>1</sup> When the pathetic peroration of M. de Sèze was read to the King, the evening before it was delivered to the Assembly, "I have to request of you," he said, "to make a painful sacrifice ; strike out of your pleading the peroration. It is enough for me to appear before such judges, and show my entire innocence ; I will not move their feelings."—*Lacretelle.*

than once conversed smilingly with Tronchet and Malesherbes. The Assembly received his defence in sullen silence, but without any tokens of disapprobation. The advocate concluded with this brief and just tribute to the virtues of the King:—

“ Louis ascended the throne at the age of twenty, and at the age of twenty he gave, upon the throne, an example of morality. He carried to it no culpable weakness, no corrupting passion. In that station he was economical, just, and severe, and proved himself the constant friend of the people. The people wished for the abolition of a disastrous impost which oppressed them;—he abolished it. The people demanded the abolition of servitude;—he began by abolishing it himself in his domains. The people solicited reforms in the criminal legislation to alleviate the condition of accused persons;—he made those reforms. The people desired that thousands of Frenchmen, whom the rigour of our customs had till then deprived of the rights belonging to citizens, might either acquire or be restored to those rights;—he extended that benefit to them by his laws. The people wanted liberty; and he conferred it. He even anticipated their wishes by his sacrifices; and yet it is in the name of this very people that men are now demanding—Citizens, I shall not finish—I pause before history. Consider that it will judge your judgment, and that its judgment will be that of ages ! ”

As soon as his advocate had finished Louis XVI. delivered a few observations which he had written. “ My means of defence,” said he, “ are now before you. I shall not repeat them. In addressing you, perhaps for the last time, I declare that my conscience reproaches me with nothing, and that my defenders have told you the truth.

“ I was never afraid that my conduct should be publicly examined; but it wounds me to the heart to find in the act of accusation the imputation that I caused the blood of the people to be spilt, and above all, that the calamitous events of the 10th of August are attributed to me.

“ I confess that the multiplied proofs which I have given at all times of my love for the people, and the manner in which I have always conducted myself, ought in my opinion to demonstrate that I was not afraid to expose myself in order to prevent bloodshed, and to clear me for ever from such an imputation.”

The President then asked Louis XVI. if he had anything more to say in his defence. Louis having declared that he had not, the President informed him that he might retire.

Being conducted to an adjoining room with his counsel, the King showed great anxiety about M. de Sèze, who seemed fatigued by the long defence. While riding back to the Temple he conversed with his companions with the same serenity as he had shown on leaving it.

No sooner had the King left the hall of the Convention than a violent tumult arose there. Some were for opening the discussion. Others, complaining of the delays which postponed the decision of this process, demanded the vote immediately, remarking that in every court, after the accused had been heard, the judges proceed to give their opinion. Lanjuinais had from the commencement of the proceedings felt an indignation, which his impetuous disposition no longer suffered him to repress. He darted to the tribune, and, amidst the cries excited by his presence, demanded the annulling of the proceedings altogether. He exclaimed that the days of ferocious men were gone by, that the Assembly ought not to be so dishonoured as to be made to sit in judgment on Louis XVI., that no authority in France had that right, and the Assembly in particular had no claim to it ; that if it resolved to act as a political body, it could do no more than take measures of safety against the *ci-devant* King ; but that if it was acting as a court of justice it was overstepping all principles, for it was subjecting the vanquished to be tried by the conquerors ; since most of the present members had declared themselves the conspirators of the 10th of August. At the word *conspirators*, a tremendous uproar arose on all sides. Cries of "*Order !*" "*To the Abbaye !*" "*Down with the Tribune !*" were heard. Lanjuinais strove in vain to justify the word *conspirators*, saying that he meant it to be taken in a favourable sense, and that the 10th of August was a glorious conspiracy. He concluded by declaring that he would rather die a thousand deaths than condemn, contrary to all laws, even the most execrable of tyrants.

A great number of speakers followed, and the confusion kept continually increasing. The members, determined not to hear any more, mingled together, formed groups, abused and threatened one another. After a tempest of an hour's duration tranquillity

was at last restored, and the Assembly, adopting the opinion of those who demanded the discussion on the trial of Louis XVI., declared that it was opened, and that it should be continued, to the exclusion of all other business, till sentence should be passed.

The discussion was accordingly resumed on the 27th, and there was a constant succession of speakers from the 28th to the 31st. Vergniaud at length ascended the tribune for the first time, and an extraordinary eagerness was manifested to hear the Girondists express their sentiments by the lips of their greatest orator, and break that silence of which Robespierre was not the only one to accuse them. Vergniaud asked if, to form a majority suitable to the wishes of certain persons, it was right to employ banishment and death, to change France into a desert, and thus deliver her up to the schemes of a handful of villains? Having avenged the majority and France, he avenged himself and his friends, whom he represented as resisting constantly, and with equal courage, all sorts of despotisms, the despotism of the Court, as well as that of the brigands of September. He represented them during the commotion of the 10th of August, sitting amidst the pealing of the cannon of the Palace, pronouncing the forfeiture of the crown before the victory of the people, while those Brutuses now so eager to take the lives of prostrate tyrants, were hiding their terrors in the bowels of the earth, and thus awaiting the issue of the uncertain battle which liberty was fighting with despotism. He strenuously urged that there was no danger of the appeal to the people, which he claimed as a right, leading to civil war. "Civil war!" he cried, "for having invoked the sovereignty of the people! . . . In July 1791 ye were more modest. Ye had no desire to paralyse it, and to reign in its stead. Ye circulated a petition for consulting the people on the judgment to be passed upon Louis on his return from Varennes! Ye then wished for the sovereignty of the people, and did not think that invoking it was capable of exciting civil war. Was it that then it favoured your secret views, and that now it is hostile to them?"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Girondists, said Napoleon, condemned the King to death, and the majority of them had voted for the appeal to the people, which was i to save him. This forms the inexplicable part of their conduct. Had wished to preserve his life, they had the power to do so; nothing more would have been necessary than to adjourn the sentence, or condemn him to exile

"Who," he concluded, "will guarantee to me that these seditious outcries of anarchical turbulence will not have the effect of rallying the aristocracy eager for revenge, poverty eager for change, and even pity itself, which inveterate prejudices will have excited for the fate of Louis? Who will guarantee to me that, amid this tempest, in which we shall see the murderers of the 2d of September issuing from their lairs, there will not be presented to you, dripping with blood, and by the title of liberator, that *defender*, that chief who is said to be so indispensable? A chief! The instant he appeared he would be pierced by a thousand wounds! But to what horrors would not Paris be consigned—Paris, whose heroic courage against kings posterity will admire, while it will be utterly incapable of conceiving her ignominious subjection to a handful of brigands, the scum of mankind, who rend her bosom by the convulsive movements of their ambition and their fury! Who could dwell in a city where terror and death would hold sway? And ye, industrious citizens, whose labour is all your wealth, and for whom the means of labour would be destroyed; ye, who have made such great sacrifices at the Revolution, and who would be deprived of the absolute necessaries of life; ye, whose virtues, whose ardent patriotism, and whose sincerity have rendered your seduction so easy, what would become of you? What would be your resources? What hand would dry your tears and carry relief to your perishing families?

"Would you apply to those false friends, those treacherous flatterers, who would have plunged you into the abyss? Ah! shun them rather! Dread their answer! I will tell you what it would be. You would ask them for bread; they would say to you, 'Go to the quarries, and dispute with the earth the pos-

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transportation. But to condemn him to death, and at the same time endeavour to make his fate depend on a popular vote, was the height of imprudence and absurdity; it was, after having destroyed the monarchy, to endeavour to tear France in pieces by a civil war. It was this false combination which ruined them. Vergniaud, their main pillar, was the very man who proclaimed, as president, the death of Louis; and he did this at the moment when the force party was such in the Assembly that it required several months' labour, more than one popular insurrection, to overturn it. That party might have ... the Convention, destroyed the Mountain, and governed France, if they had at once pursued a manly, straightforward conduct. It was the refinement metaphysicians which occasioned their fall.—*Las Cases.*

session of the mangled flesh of the victims whom ye have slaughtered !' Or, 'Do you want blood ? here it is, take it—blood and carcases. We have no other food to offer you !' . . . Ye shudder, citizens ! O my country, I call upon thee in my turn to attest the efforts that I make to save thee from this deplorable crisis !'<sup>1</sup>

This extempore speech of Vergniaud produced a deep impression on all his hearers. Robespierre was thunderstruck by his earnest and persuasive eloquence. Vergniaud, however, had but shaken, not convinced, the Assembly, which wavered between the two parties. Several members were successively heard, for and against the appeal to the people. Brissot, Gensonné, Pétion, supported it in their turn. One speaker at length had a decisive influence on the question. This was Barère. By his suppleness, and his cold and evasive eloquence, he was the model and oracle of the centre. He spoke at great length on the trial, reviewed it in all its bearings—of facts, of laws, and of policy—and furnished all those weak minds who only wanted specious reasons for yielding, with motives for the condemnation of the King. From that moment the unfortunate King was condemned. The discussion lasted till the 7th, and nobody would listen any longer to the continual repetition of the same facts and arguments. It was therefore declared to be closed without opposition, but the proposal of a fresh adjournment excited a commotion among the most violent, and ended in a decree which fixed the 14th of January for putting the questions to the vote.

Meantime the King did not allow the torturing suspense to disturb his outward composure, or lessen his kindness to those around him. On the morning after his second appearance at the bar of the Convention, the commissary Vincent, who had undertaken secretly to convey to the Queen a copy of the King's printed defence, asked for something which had belonged to him, to treasure as a relic ; the King took off his neck handkerchief

<sup>1</sup> It is known that throughout the King's trial the deputy Vergniaud seemed in despair, and passed the whole night after the monarch's condemnation in tears ; and it is probable that the same night was as dreadful to all his colleagues, if we except a small number who, in their absurd ferocity, declared in the National Assembly that Louis XVI. deserved death for the single crime of being a king, and condemned him merely because they wished to destroy royalty.—*Bertrand de Molleville.*

and gave it him ; his gloves he bestowed on another municipal, who had made the same request. "On January 1st," says Clery, "I approached the King's bed and asked permission to offer him my warmest prayers for the end of his misfortunes. 'I accept your good wishes with affection,' he replied, extending his hand to me. As soon as he had risen, he requested a municipal to go and inquire for his family, and present them his good wishes for the new year. The officers were moved by the tone in which these words, so heartrending, considering the position of the King, were pronounced. . . . The correspondence between their Majesties went on constantly. The King being informed that Madame Royale was ill, was very uneasy for some days. The Queen, after begging earnestly, obtained permission for M. Brunnier, the medical attendant of the royal children, to come to the Temple. This seemed to quiet him."<sup>1</sup>

The nearer the moment which was to decide the King's fate approached, says Thiers, the greater became the agitation in Paris. At the theatres voices favourable to Louis XVI. had been raised on the performance of *L'Ami des Lois*. "The commune had ordered all the playhouses to be shut up ; but the executive council had revoked that measure as a violation of the liberty of the press, in which was comprehended the liberty of the theatre. Deep consternation pervaded the prisons. A report was circulated that the atrocities of September were to be repeated there, and the prisoners and their relatives beset the députés with supplications that they would snatch them from destruction. The Jacobins, on their part, alleged that conspiracies were hatching in all quarters to save Louis XVI. from punishment, and to restore royalty. Their anger, excited by delays and obstacles, assumed a more threatening aspect ; and the two parties thus alarmed one another by supposing that each harboured sinister designs."

The debates of the 14th, 15th, and 16th January 1793 were so important to the royal family and the nation, that it will be of interest to reproduce the actual words of some of the speakers, as reported at the time.

<sup>1</sup> "I had something the matter with my foot," writes Madame Royale, "and my father, having heard of it, was, with his usual tenderness, very uneasy, and made constant inquiries."

On the 14th January the Convention called for the order of the day, being

#### THE FINAL JUDGMENT OF LOUIS XVI.

*M. Lebardi.* There is a great variety of opinions in this Assembly relative to the conduct of Louis XVI., but there is one fact which we all ought to recognise, and that is that his judgment ought to be sanctioned by the people.

*M. Denou* presented a series of questions to be decided upon by the Convention.

*M. Louvet* wished to know, previous to his passing sentence on Louis XVI., whether there was to be an appeal to the Primary Assemblies?

*Cambacérès, Gaudet, and Quenette* argued on the mode of decision.

The President then summed up what had been said by the various members, and put the question twice without effect. The *Appel Nominal* was then called for, and after much noise, riot, and confusion, it was decided that the following order should be observed relative to the questions about to be discussed:—

- (1.) Is Louis guilty?
- (2.) Shall the judgment be committed to the sanction of the people?
- (3.) What punishment shall be inflicted upon him?

On 15th January, during profound silence, M. Manuel read the first question with an audible voice:

"Is Louis guilty of a conspiracy against the liberty of the Nation and the safety of the State?"

The subject of deliberation being thus enounced, *Salles*, another of the secretaries, commenced the *Appel Nominal*.

Each member in his turn ascended the tribune and expressed his opinion by saying "Yes" or "No." At the same time his declaration was registered exactly opposite his name, in order that printed lists might be made out and transmitted to the 84 departments.

The *Appel Nominal* being finished, the President examined the register and made the following report:—

"Of 745 members that form the Convention, 693 have voted

for the affirmative, 26 are absent upon public business, 26 have made different declarations, but not a single person has voted for the negative."

The third series of votes was postponed till the following day, which drew together a still greater concourse. It was the decisive sitting ; the tribunes were early occupied by the Jacobins, whose eyes were fixed on the bureau at which every member was to deliver his vote. Great part of the day was taken up by measures of public order, and it was decided that the sitting should be permanent till the voting was over. It began at half-past seven in the evening, and lasted all night.<sup>1</sup>

As each deputy ascended the steps of the bureau silence was observed in order that he might be heard ; but after he had given his vote, tokens of approbation or disapprobation burst forth, and accompanied his return to his seat. The tribunes received with murmurs all votes that were not for death ; and they frequently addressed threatening gestures to the Assembly itself. The deputies replied to them from the interior of the hall, and hence resulted a tumultuous exchange of menaces and abusive epithets. This fearfully ominous scene shook all minds,

<sup>1</sup> The sitting of the Convention which concluded the trial lasted seventy-two hours. It might naturally be supposed that silence, restraint, a sort of religious awe, would have pervaded the scene. On the contrary, everything bore the marks of gaiety, dissipation, and the most grotesque confusion. The farther end of the hall was converted into boxes, where ladies, in a studied *déshabillé*, swallowed ices, oranges, liqueurs, and received the salutations of the members who went and came, as on ordinary occasions. Here the door-keepers on the Mountain side opened and shut the boxes reserved for the mistresses of the Duc d'Orléans ; and there, though every sound of approbation or disapprobation was strictly forbidden, you heard the long and indignant "Ha, ha's !" of the mother-duchess, the patroness of the bands of female Jacobins, whenever her ears were not loudly greeted with the welcome sounds of death. The upper gallery, reserved for the people, was during the whole trial constantly full of strangers of every description drinking wine as in a tavern. Bets were made as to the issue of the trial in all the neighbouring coffee-houses. Ennui, impatience, disgust sat on almost every countenance. The figures passing and repassing, rendered more ghastly by the pallid lights, and who in a slow, sepulchral voice only pronounced the word—*Death* ; others calculating if they should have time to go to dinner before they gave their verdict ; women pricking cards with pins in order to count the votes ; some of the deputies fallen asleep, and only waking up to give their sentence ; all this had the appearance rather of a hideous dream than of a reality.—Hazlitt's *Life of Napoleon*.

and changed many resolutions.<sup>1</sup> Lecointe, of Versailles, whose courage was undoubted, and who had not ceased to respond to the gesticulation of the tribunes, advanced to the bureau, hesitated, and at length dropped from his lips the unexpected and terrible word *Death*. Vergniaud, who had appeared deeply affected by the fate of Louis XVI., and who had declared to his friends that he never could condemn that unfortunate Prince,—Vergniaud, on beholding this tumultuous scene, imagined that he saw civil war kindled in France, and pronounced sentence of death, with the addition, however, of Mailhe's amendment, that they should inquire whether it was not expedient to stay the execution. On being questioned respecting his change of opinion, Vergniaud replied that he thought he beheld civil war on the point of breaking out, and that he durst not balance the life of an individual against the welfare of France.

We shall here repeat the observations of some of those who did not decide directly on the question.

*M. Rouzet.* I cannot divide my opinion: I think that Louis and his family ought to be confined during the present war, unless some extraordinary circumstance occurs.

*M. Wandelaincourt (a bishop).* My holy functions do not permit me to pronounce in criminal matters.

*M. Lalande (a bishop).* I am exactly in the same predicament.

*M. Offelin.* I declare Louis guilty, and I beg leave to observe that although he asserted, through the medium of his defender, that the Body Guard was only paid up to January 1792, yet they actually received their appointments until the middle of July in that year.

*M. Conté.* I vote in the affirmative as a legislator, but as a judge I have not anything to say.

*M. Noël.* I cannot vote at all, because I have lost a son during a war that Louis has raised up against my country.

*MM. Fauchet, Dubois, Dubain, Larivière, and Douée* said they were convinced of the guilt of Louis Capet; but they could

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<sup>1</sup> Many great and good men mournfully inclined to the severer side, from an opinion of its absolute necessity to annihilate a dangerous enemy, and establish an unsettled republic. Among these must be reckoned Carnot, who, when called on for his opinion, gave it in these words: “*Death; and never did word weigh so heavily on my heart!*”—*Alison.*

not vote, on account of the manner in which the questions had been put.

*M. Chambon.* Louis is guilty ; but this vote is conditional—that is, if you appeal to the people.

*MM. Girouetti and Baraillon* begged leave to be excused from giving their opinion.

*M. Egalité.* *Louis Capet is guilty.*<sup>1</sup>

The President at the close of the *Appel Nominal*, arose, and taking off his hat spoke as follows :—

“I hereby declare that the National Convention has found Louis Capet guilty of a conspiracy against the liberty of the Nation and the safety of the State.”

A secretary now read the second question, “Shall the decree relative to the fate of Louis Capet be submitted to the judgment of the people ?”

During the second *Appel Nominal* all the members in succession ascended the tribune. Those who voted for the appeal to the people declared themselves swayed by the dread of tumults in the Primary Assemblies.

*M. Robespierre.* I vote that the sentence of Louis Capet be decided by the Convention.

*M. Manuel.* I see legislators, not judges in this Assembly. I appeal to the people. I was shocked to observe Philippe Egalité, a relation of the late King, deciding upon his guilt !

*Philippe Egalité.* I thought of my duty, and of nothing else, when I declared Louis Capet guilty. I now vote that his judgment be not submitted to the people.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “I cannot express the horror which was painted on the countenance of every individual in the National Convention when the Duke gave his votes for the death of his King and relation.”—*From the narrative of an eyewitness.*

The Duc d'Orléans, when called on to give his vote, walked with a faltering step, and a face paler than death itself, to the appointed place, and there read these words : “Exclusively governed by my duty, and convinced that all those who have resisted the sovereignty of the people deserve death, my vote is for death !” Important as the accession of the first Prince of the blood was to the terrorist faction, his conduct in this instance was too obviously selfish and atrocious not to excite a general feeling of indignation ; the agitation of the Assembly became extreme ; it seemed as if by this single vote the fate of the monarch was irrevocably sealed.—*History of the Convention.*

<sup>2</sup> The Duc d'Orléans lived in Paris, striving in vain to hide himself in

*M. Camille Desmoulins.* The King of Prussia was formerly bribed by Russia, and I am afraid that some persons here are bought over by England and Holland. I vote for a final decision.

This member was instantly called to order, and censured by the President.

*M. Dufraux.* An appeal to the people. (This member having been insulted by a stranger on going out, the latter was instantly arrested.)

*M. Pons.* I have altered my opinion. I now vote against the appeal.

*M. Barbaroux.* I also wish the appeal to the people, and that because it has been negatived by Philippe d'Orléans. I vote for this also, because I dread lest an usurper should succeed a tyrant.

*M. Chambon.* I too appeal to the people, because I behold a powerful faction, in the midst of whom is Philippe d'Orléans.

The President having examined the register, the result of the scrutiny was proclaimed as follows:—

For an appeal to the people . . . .	283
Against an appeal to the people . . . .	480
Majority for final judgment . . . .	197

The President, taking off his hat, then said: "I do hereby declare, in the name of the Convention, that the decree concern-

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the bosom of the Convention. This place most assuredly was not suited to him amidst furious demagogues. But whither was he to fly? In Europe the emigrants were ready for him, and insult, nay, perhaps even death, threatened this kinsman of royalty, who had repudiated his birthright and his rank. In France he strove to disguise that rank under the humblest titles, and he called himself *Egalité*. But still there remained the ineffaceable remembrance of his former existence, and the ever-present testimony of his immense wealth. Unless he were to put on rags, and render himself contemptible by cynicism, how was he to escape suspicion? In the ranks of the Girondists he would have been undone the very first day, and all the charges of royalism preferred against them would have been justified. In those of the Jacobins he would have the violence of Paris for a support, but he could not have escaped the accusations of the Girondists; and this it was that actually befell him. The latter, never forgiving him for having joined the ranks of their enemies, supposed that, to make himself endurable, he lavished his wealth on anarchists, and lent them the aid of his mighty fortune.—*Thiers.*

ing the punishment of Louis Capet shall not be referred to the sanction of the people."

On the morning of the 16th, Cléry says that M. de Malesherbes remained some time with the King, and on going out promised to give him the result of the voting as soon as it was known. At six o'clock in the evening four municipals entered the King's room with an order from the Commune to the effect that they should keep him constantly in sight, and that two of them should pass the night at the side of his bed. The King asked if his sentence was pronounced; one of the municipals seated himself in an armchair by which the King was standing, and then replied that he did not concern himself about what passed at the Convention, but he had heard that they were still voting.

On the following day (January 17) the *Appel Nominal* for declaring the punishment to be inflicted upon Louis XVI. was continued.

*M. Ysabeau.* It is repugnant to my nature to pronounce sentence of death against a fellow-creature. It is now my consolation that I pronounce it upon a tyrant !

*F. B. Lacoste.* A living tyrant is a beacon of our enemies. His death will terminate all our troubles and divisions, give peace to the Republic, and destroy the growth of prejudice. I vote for death.

*Manuel.* We talk of the Romans ; let us imitate them. I vote that Louis be imprisoned during the war, and expelled on the return of peace.

*Robert.* I vote for death ! Ah ! could we but as easily dispose of all tyrants !

*Heron.* If the majority ordain banishment, I shall move that the statue of Junius Brutus be erected. My sentence is, Death.

*Sillery.* I vote for the detention and not the death of Louis, as I am convinced that in that case it will be impossible to re-establish royalty.

*Lasource.* Let Louis die ; but recollect that you will merit the opprobrium of posterity if you do not smite the first ambitious man who pretends to succeed him.

*Isnard.* I said in the Legislative Assembly that if I commanded the thunder, I should overwhelm the first man who dared

to attempt the liberty of my country. I now vote for the death of Louis; but as his brothers are not less guilty than himself, I demand that they may be tried within twenty-four hours after his demise, and executed in effigy.

*Goupilleaux.* I vote for instant death.

*Lakanal.* A Republican speaks but little (*placing his hand upon his breast*)—Death!

*Barbaroux.* I now vote for the death of the tyrant, and shall soon move the expulsion of all his family.

*M. Ducoz.* The forms of the proceeding have been extraordinary, and so has been the occasion; were they employed against an ordinary individual I should denounce them to mankind. I consent to the death of Louis.

*Russet.* It were to have been wished that the punishment to be inflicted upon Louis had been pronounced by the people; this would have afforded the surest means of acquiring the approbation of neighbouring nations, and also of defeating the projects of the tyrants of Europe, who desire the punishment of the *ci-devant* King in order to excite the hatred and indignation of mankind against the National Convention, but as the Assembly has thought proper to reject the appeal to the people, I now am of opinion that the sole mode of avoiding the dangers which at present menace us is to pronounce the sentence of death against Louis, and to defer the execution of it until that moment when the people shall have sanctioned the constitution which we are about to submit to their acceptance.

*Thomas Paine* did not vote, but sent his opinion to the President, to the effect that Louis Capet should be banished, but not until the end of the war, during the continuance of which he should be kept in prison.

The President having announced that he was about to declare the result of the scrutiny, a profound silence ensued, and he then gave in the following declaration, that out of 719 votes 366 were for DEATH, 319 were for imprisonment during the war, 2 for perpetual imprisonment, 8 for a suspension of the execution of the sentence of death until after the expulsion of the family of the Bourbons, 23 were for not putting him to death until the French territory was invaded by any foreign power, and 1 was

for a sentence of death, but with power of commutation of the punishment.<sup>1</sup>

After this enumeration the President took off his hat, and lowering his voice said, "In consequence of this expression of opinion I declare that the punishment pronounced by the National Convention against Louis Capet is DEATH!"

Previous to the passing of the sentence the President announced on the part of the Foreign Minister the receipt of a letter from the Spanish Minister relative to that sentence. The Convention, however, refused to hear it. [It will be remembered that a similar remonstrance was forwarded by the English Government.]

M. de Malesherbes, according to his promise to the King, went to the Temple at nine o'clock on the morning of the 17th.<sup>2</sup> "All is lost," he said to Clery. "The King is condemned." The King, who saw him arrive, rose to receive him.<sup>3</sup> M. de Males-

<sup>1</sup> The analysis of votes given by Thiers slightly differs from this, and is as follows :—

The Assembly was composed of seven hundred and forty-nine members : fifteen were absent on commissions, eight from illness, five had refused to vote, which reduced the number of deputies present to seven hundred and twenty-one, and the absolute majority to three hundred and sixty-one votes. Two hundred and eighty-six had voted for detention or banishment with different conditions. Two had voted for imprisonment ; forty-six for death with reprieve either till peace, or till the ratification of the constitution. Twenty-six had voted for death, but, with Mailhe, they had desired that the Assembly should consider whether it might not be expedient to stay the execution. Their vote was nevertheless independent of the latter clause. Three hundred and sixty-one had voted for death unconditionally.—*French Revolution*, vol. ii. p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> Louis was fully prepared for his fate. During the calling of the votes he asked M. de Malesherbes, "Have you not met near the Temple the White Lady?"—"What do you mean?" replied he. "Do you not know," resumed the King with a smile, "that when a prince of our house is about to die, a female dressed in white is seen wandering about the palace? My friends," added he to his defenders, "I am about to depart before you for the land of the just, but there, at least, we shall be reunited." In fact, his Majesty's only apprehension seemed to be for his family.—*Alison*.

<sup>3</sup> When M. de Malesherbes went to the Temple to announce the result of the vote, he found Louis with his forehead resting on his hands, and absorbed in a deep reverie. Without inquiring concerning his fate, he said, "For two hours I have been considering whether, during my whole reign, I have voluntarily given any cause of complaint to my subjects ; and with perfect sincerity I declare that I deserve no reproach at their hands, and that I have never formed a wish but for their happiness."—*Lacretelle*.

herbes threw himself at his feet choked by sobs. The King raised him up and affectionately embraced him. When he could control his voice, De Malesherbes informed the King of the decree sentencing him to death ; he made no movement of surprise or emotion, but seemed only affected by the distress of his advocate, whom he tried to comfort.<sup>1</sup>

When M. de Malesherbes returned to the Convention the three advocates of the King were admitted to the bar. M. de Sèze then said, "Citizens, Representatives, the Law and Decrees have entrusted to us the sacred function of the defence of Louis. We come with regret to present to you the last act of our function. Louis has given to us his express charge to read to you a letter signed with his own hand, of which the following is a copy :—

LETTER FROM LOUIS.

*"I owe to my own honour, I owe to my family, not to subscribe to a sentence which declares me guilty of a crime of which I cannot accuse myself."*

*"In consequence I appeal to the Nation from the sentence of its Representatives; and I commit by these presents to the fidelity of my defenders to make known to the National Convention this appeal by all the means in their power, and to demand that mention of it be made in the minutes of their sittings."*

(Signed)      "LOUIS."

M. de Sèze then prayed the National Convention in the name of his colleagues to consider by what a small majority the punishment of death was pronounced against Louis. "Do not afflict France," added the worthy citizen, "by a judgment that will appear to her to be terrible when five (?) voices only were thought sufficient to carry it." He invoked Eternal Justice and Sacred Humanity to determine the Convention to refer their judgment to the tribunal of the people.

<sup>1</sup> Madame Royale says that M. de Malesherbes added, after telling her father the nature of his sentence, "Every honest man will endeavour to save your Majesty, or die at your feet ;" but the King replied, "Such proceedings would excite a civil war in Paris—I had rather die. You will, therefore, I entreat you, command them from me to make no effort to save me."—*Royal Memoirs*, p. 197.

"We declare," said *M. Tronchet*, "that it is inconceivable that the greatest number of voters have invoked the Penal Code to justify their judgment, and that they have forgotten the indulgence of the law in favour of the accused. They have forgotten that the law requires *two-thirds* of the voices for the decision."

*M. de Malesherbes* demanded of the Assembly to give him until the following day to make such reflections as crowded upon his imagination.

After the defenders of Louis had finished their observations they were invited to the honours of the sitting.

*M. Robespierre* opposed the inserting in the *procès-verbal* of the appeal to the people demanded by Louis. He claimed that such appeal should be declared contrary to the principles of public justice and an invasion of the authority of the National Convention, and that those ought to be considered as conspirators who thought otherwise.

*M. Gaudet* was also against the appeal to the people; but he demanded an adjournment until after *M. de Malesherbes* had been heard upon the question, whether it is for the interest of the French people that the execution of the judgment pronounced against Louis ought to be delayed or accelerated.

The decision upon the question rejected the appeal to the people and the observations to be made by *M. de Malesherbes*, and it was decreed that the National Convention "should examine whether the national interest did or did not require an arrest of judgment in the execution of the sentence pronounced against Louis."

Thus after thirty-six hours the sitting was concluded—a sitting that the latest posterity will never forget!

The executive council was charged with the melancholy commission of carrying the sentence into execution. Garat, as Minister of Justice, had the most painful of all tasks imposed upon him, that of acquainting Louis XVI. with the decrees of the Convention.<sup>1</sup> He repaired to the Temple, accompanied by

<sup>1</sup> The sentence of death was announced by Garat. No alteration took place in the King's countenance; I observed only at the word "conspiracy," a smile of indignation appear on his lips; but at the words "shall suffer the punishment of death," the expression of his face, when he looked on those around him, showed that death had no terrors for him.—*Clery*.

Santerre, by a deputation of the Commune and of the criminal tribunal, and by the secretary of the executive council. On the 20th of January, at two in the afternoon, Louis XVI. was awaiting his advocates, when he heard the approach of a numerous party. He stopped with dignity at the door of his apartment, apparently unmoved. Garat then told him sorrowfully that he was commissioned to communicate to him the decrees of the Convention. Grouvelle, secretary of the executive council, read them to him. The first declared Louis XVI. guilty of treason against the general safety of the State; the second condemned him to death; the third rejected any appeal to the people; and the fourth and last ordered his execution in twenty-four hours. Louis, looking calmly round, took the paper from Grouvelle, and read Garat a letter, in which he demanded from the Convention three days to prepare for death, a confessor to assist him in his last moments, liberty to see his family, and permission for them to leave France. Garat took the letter, promising to submit it immediately to the Convention.

Louis XVI. then went back into his room with great composure, ordered his dinner, and ate as usual. There were no knives on the table, and his attendants refused to let him have any. "Do they think me so cowardly," he exclaimed, "as to lay violent hands on myself? I am innocent, and I am not afraid to die."

The Convention refused the delay, but granted the other demands which he had made. Garat sent for Edgeworth de Firmont, the ecclesiastic whom Louis XVI. had chosen, and took him in his own carriage to the Temple.<sup>1</sup> M. Edgeworth, on being ushered into the presence of the King, would have thrown

<sup>1</sup> Henry Essex Edgeworth de Firmont, father-confessor of Louis XVI., was born in Ireland in 1745, in the village of Edgeworthstown. His father, an episcopalian clergyman, adopted the Catholic faith with his family, and went to France. His piety and good conduct obtained him the confidence of Madame Elizabeth, who chose him for her confessor, and made him known to Louis. M. Edgeworth arrived in England in 1796. Pitt offered him a pension, which he declined. He soon after followed Louis XVIII. to Blankenburg in Brunswick, and thence to Mittau. M. Edgeworth died in 1807, of a fever caught in attending to some French emigrants. The Duchesse d'Angoulême waited on him in his last moments, the royal family followed him to the tomb, and Louis XVIII. wrote his epitaph.—*Encyclopædia Americana*.

himself at his feet, but Louis instantly raised him, and both shed tears of emotion. He then, with eager curiosity, asked various questions, concerning the clergy of France, several bishops, and particularly the Archbishop of Paris, requesting him to assure the latter that he died faithfully attached to his communion. The clock having struck eight, he rose, begged M. Edgeworth to wait, and retired with emotion, saying that he was going to see his family. The municipal officers, unwilling to lose sight of the King, even while with his family, had decided that he should see them in the dining-room, which had a glass door, through which they could watch all his motions without hearing what he said. At half-past eight the door opened. The Queen, holding the Dauphin by the hand, Madame Elizabeth, and Madame Royale, rushed sobbing into the arms of Louis XVI. The door was closed, and the municipal officers, Clery, and M. Edgeworth placed themselves behind it. During the first moments, it was but a scene of confusion and despair. Cries and lamentations prevented those who were on the watch from distinguishing anything. At length the conversation became more calm, and the Princesses, still holding the King clasped in their arms, spoke with him in a low tone. "He related his trial to my mother," says Madame Royale, "apologising for the wretches who had condemned him. He told her that he would not consent to any attempt to save him, which might excite disturbance in the country. He then gave my brother some religious advice, and desired him, above all, to forgive those who caused his death; and he gave us his blessing. My mother was very desirous that the whole family should pass the night with my father, but he opposed this, observing to her that he much needed some hours of repose and quiet." After a long conversation, interrupted by silence and grief, the King put an end to the painful meeting, agreeing to see his family again at eight the next morning. "Do you promise that you will?" earnestly inquired the Princesses. "Yes, yes," sorrowfully replied the King.<sup>1</sup> At this moment the Queen held him by one arm, Madame Elizabeth by the other, while Madame Royale clasped him round the waist,

<sup>1</sup> "But when we were gone," says his daughter, "he requested that we might not be permitted to return, as our presence afflicted him too much."

and the Dauphin stood before him, with one hand in that of his mother. At the moment of retiring Madame Royale fainted ; she was carried away, and the King returned to M. Edgeworth deeply depressed by this painful interview. The King retired to rest about midnight ; M. Edgeworth threw himself upon a bed, and Cléry took his place near the pillow of his master.

Next morning, the 21st of January, at five, the King awoke, called Cléry, and dressed with great calmness. He congratulated himself on having recovered his strength by sleep. Cléry kindled a fire, and moved a chest of drawers, out of which he formed an altar. M. Edgeworth put on his pontifical robes, and began to celebrate mass. Cléry waited on him, and the King listened, kneeling with the greatest devotion. He then received the communion from the hands of M. Edgeworth, and after mass rose with new vigour, and awaited with composure the moment for going to the scaffold. He asked for scissors that Cléry might cut his hair ; but the Commune refused to trust him with a pair.

At this moment the drums were beating in the capital. All who belonged to the armed sections repaired to their company with complete submission. It was reported that four or five hundred devoted men were to make a dash upon the carriage, and rescue the King. The Convention, the Commune, the executive council, and the Jacobins were sitting. At eight in the morning, Santerre, with a deputation from the Commune, the department, and the criminal tribunal, repaired to the Temple. Louis XVI., on hearing them arrive, rose and prepared to depart. He desired Cléry to transmit his last farewell to his wife, his sister, and his children ; he gave him a sealed packet, hair, and various trinkets, with directions to deliver these articles to them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the course of the morning the King said to me, “ You will give this seal to my son and this ring to the Queen, and assure her that it is with pain I part with it. This little packet contains the hair of all my family ; you will give her that too. Tell the Queen, my dear sister, and my children that, although I promised to see them again this morning, I have resolved to spare them the pang of so cruel a separation. Tell them how much it costs me to go away without receiving their embraces once more ! ” He wiped away some tears, and then added in the most mournful accents, “ I charge you to bear them my last farewell.” — *Cléry.*

He then clasped his hand and thanked him for his services. After this he addressed himself to one of the municipal officers, requesting him to transmit his last will to the Commune. This officer, who had formerly been a priest, and was named Jacques Roux, brutally replied that his business was to conduct him to execution, and not to perform his commissions. Another person took charge of it, and Louis, turning towards the party, gave with firmness the signal for starting.

Officers of gendarmerie were placed on the front seat of the carriage. The King and M. Edgeworth occupied the back. During the ride, which was rather long, the King read in M. Edgeworth's breviary the prayers for persons at the point of death; the two gendarmes were astonished at his piety and tranquil resignation. The vehicle advanced slowly, and amidst universal silence. At the Place de la Révolution an extensive space had been left vacant about the scaffold. Around this space were planted cannon; the most violent of the Federalists were stationed about the scaffold; and the vile rabble, always ready to insult genius, virtue, and misfortune, when a signal is given it to do so, crowded behind the ranks of the Federalists, and alone manifested some outward tokens of satisfaction.

At ten minutes past ten the carriage stopped. Louis XVI., rising briskly, stepped out into the Place. Three executioners came up; he refused their assistance, and took off his clothes himself. But, perceiving that they were going to bind his hands, he made a movement of indignation, and seemed ready to resist. M. Edgeworth gave him a last look, and said, "Suffer this outrage, as a last resemblance to that God who is about to be your reward." At these words the King suffered himself to be bound and conducted to the scaffold. All at once Louis hurriedly advanced to address the people. "Frenchmen," said he, in a firm voice, "I die innocent of the crimes which are imputed to me; I forgive the authors of my death, and I pray that my blood may not fall upon France."<sup>1</sup> He would have continued, but the drums were instantly ordered to beat: their rolling drowned his voice; the executioners laid hold of him, and M. Edgeworth took his leave in these memorable words: "Son of Saint Louis, ascend to

<sup>1</sup> Thiers' *French Revolution*.

heaven!"<sup>1</sup> As soon as the blood flowed, furious wretches dipped their pikes and handkerchiefs in it, then dispersed throughout Paris, shouting "*Vive la République! Vive la Nation!*" and even went to the gates of the Temple to display brutal and factious joy.<sup>2</sup>

THE ROYAL PRISONERS—SEPARATION OF THE DAUPHIN FROM  
HIS FAMILY—REMOVAL OF THE QUEEN.

On the morning of the King's execution, according to the narrative of Madame Royale, his family rose at six: "The night before, my mother had scarcely strength enough to put my brother to bed. She threw herself, dressed as she was, on her own bed, where we heard her *shivering with cold and grief all night long*. At a quarter past six the door opened; we believed that we were sent for to the King, but it was only the officers looking for a prayer-book for him. We did not, however, abandon the hope of seeing him, till shouts of joy from the infuriated populace told

<sup>1</sup> Thus perished, at the age of thirty-nine, after a reign of sixteen years and a half, spent in endeavouring to do good, the best but weakest of monarchs. His ancestors bequeathed him a revolution. He was better calculated than any of them to prevent or terminate it; for he was capable of becoming a reforming king before it broke out, or of becoming a constitutional king afterwards. He is, perhaps, the only prince who, having no other passion, had not that of power, and who united the two qualities which make good kings—fear of God, and love of the people. He perished, the victim of passions which he did not share; of those of the persons about him to which he was a stranger, and of those of the multitude which he had not excited.—Mignet's *French Revolution*, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> The body of Louis was, immediately after the execution, removed to the ancient cemetery of the Madeleine. Large quantities of quicklime were thrown into the grave, which occasioned so rapid a decomposition that, when his remains were sought for in 1815, it was with difficulty any part could be recovered. Over the spot where he was interred Napoleon commenced the splendid Temple of Glory, after the battle of Jena; and the superb edifice was completed by the Bourbons, and now forms the church of the Madeléine, the most beautiful structure in Paris. Louis was executed on the same ground where the Queen, Madame Elizabeth, and so many other noble victims of the Revolution perished; where Robespierre and Danton afterwards suffered; and where the Emperor Alexander and the allied sovereigns took their station, when their victorious troops entered Paris in 1814! The history of modern Europe has not a scene fraught with equally interesting recollections to exhibit. It is now marked by the colossal obelisk of blood-red granite which was brought from Thebes, in Upper Egypt, in 1833, by the French Government.—*Alison*.

us that all was over. In the afternoon my mother asked to see Clery, who probably had some message for her ; we hoped that seeing him would occasion a burst of grief which might relieve the state of silent and choking agony in which we saw her." The request was refused, and the officers who brought the refusal said Clery was in "a frightful state of despair" at not being allowed to see the royal family ; shortly afterwards he was dismissed from the Temple.

"We had now a little more freedom," continues the Princess ; "our guards even believed that we were about to be sent out of France ; but nothing could calm my mother's agony ; no hope could touch her heart ; and life or death became indifferent to her. Fortunately my own affliction increased my illness so seriously that it distracted her thoughts. . . . My mother would go no more to the garden, because she must have passed the door of what had been my father's room, and that she could not bear. But fearing lest want of air should prove injurious to my brother and me, about the end of February she asked permission to walk on the leads of the Tower, and it was granted." The council of the Commune becoming aware of the interest which these sad promenades excited, and the sympathy with which they were observed from the neighbouring houses, ordered that the spaces between the battlements should be filled up with shutters, which intercepted the view. But while the rules for the Queen's captivity were again made more strict, some of the municipal commissioners tried slightly to alleviate it, and by means of M. de Huë, who was at liberty in Paris, and the faithful Turgi, who remained in the Tower, some communications passed between the royal family and their friends. The wife of Tison, who waited on the Queen, suspected and finally denounced these more lenient guardians,<sup>1</sup> who were executed, the royal prisoners being subjected to a close examination.

"On the 20th of April," says Madame Royale, "my mother and I had just gone to bed when Hebert arrived with several municipals. We got up hastily, and these men read us a decree of the Commune directing that we should be searched. My poor brother was asleep ; they tore him from his bed under the

<sup>1</sup> Toulan, Lepitre, Vincent, Bruno, and others.

pretext of examining it. My mother took him up, shivering with cold. All they took were a shopkeeper's card which my mother had happened to keep, a stick of sealing-wax from my aunt, and from me *une sacré cœur de Jésus* and a prayer for the welfare of France. The search lasted from half-past ten at night till four o'clock in the morning." The next visit of the officials was to Madame Elizabeth alone; they found in her room a hat which the King had worn during his imprisonment, and which she had begged him to give her as a souvenir. They took it from her in spite of her entreaties: "It was suspicious," said the cruel and contemptible tyrants.

The Dauphin became ill with fever, and it was long before his mother, who watched by him night and day, could obtain medicine or advice for him. When Thierry was at last allowed to see him his treatment relieved the most violent symptoms, but, says Madame Royale, "his health was never re-established. Want of air and exercise did him great mischief, as well as the kind of life which this poor child led, who at eight years old passed his days amidst the tears of his friends, and in constant anxiety and agony."

While the Dauphin's health was causing his family such alarm they were deprived of the services of Tison's wife, who became ill, and finally insane, and was removed to the Hôtel Dieu, where her ravings were reported to the Assembly and made the ground of accusations against the royal prisoners.<sup>1</sup> No woman took her place, and the Princesses themselves made their beds, swept their rooms, and waited upon the Queen.

Far worse punishments than menial work were prepared for them. On 3d July a decree of the Convention ordered that the Dauphin should be separated from his family and "placed in the

<sup>1</sup> This woman, troubled by remorse, lost her reason, threw herself at the feet of the Queen, implored her pardon, and disturbed the Temple for many days with the sight and the noise of her madness. The Princesses, forgetting the denunciations of this unfortunate being, in consideration of her repentance and insanity, watched over her by turns, and deprived themselves of their own food to relieve her. — Lamartine, *History of the Girondists*, vol. iii. p. 140. The first time Tison's wife showed signs of madness, "she began to talk to herself," says Madame Royale simply; "alas! that made me laugh; and my poor mother and aunt looked at me as though they saw with pleasure that short moment of gaiety."

most secure apartment of the Tower." As soon as he heard this decree pronounced, says his sister, "he threw himself into my mother's arms, and with violent cries entreated not to be parted from her. My mother would not let her son go, and she actually defended against the efforts of the officers the bed in which she had placed him. The men threatened to call up the guard and use violence. My mother exclaimed that they had better kill her than tear her child from her. At last they threatened our lives, and my mother's maternal tenderness forced her to the sacrifice. My aunt and I dressed the child, for my poor mother had no longer strength for anything. Nevertheless, when he was dressed, she took him up in her arms and delivered him herself to the officers, bathing him with her tears, foreseeing that she was never to behold him again. The poor little fellow embraced us all tenderly, and was carried away in a flood of tears. My mother's horror was extreme when she heard that Simon, a shoemaker by trade, whom she had seen as a municipal officer in the Temple, was the person to whom her child was confided. . . . The officers now no longer remained in my mother's apartment ; they only came three times a day to bring our meals and examine the bolts and bars of our windows ; we were locked up together night and day. We often went up to the Tower, because my brother went, too, from the other side. The only pleasure my mother enjoyed was seeing him through a crevice as he passed at a distance. She would watch for hours together to see him as he passed. It was her only hope, her only thought."

The Queen was soon deprived even of this melancholy consolation. On 1st August 1793 it was resolved that she should be tried. Robespierre opposed the measure, but Barère roused into action that deep-rooted hatred of the Queen which not even the sacrifice of her life availed to eradicate. "Why do the enemies of the Republic still hope for success?" he asked. "Is it because we have too long forgotten *the crimes of the Austrian*? The children of Louis the Conspirator are hostages for the Republic . . . but behind them lurks a woman who has been the cause of all the disasters of France."<sup>1</sup> At two o'clock on the morning of the following day the municipal officers "awoke us,"

<sup>1</sup> Alison's *History of Europe*, vol. iii. p. 162.

says Madame Royale, "to read to my mother the decree of the Convention, which ordered her removal to the Conciergerie,<sup>1</sup> preparatory to her trial. She heard it without visible emotion, and without speaking a single word. My aunt and I immediately asked to be allowed to accompany my mother, but this favour was refused us. All the time my mother was making up a bundle of clothes to take with her these officers never left her. She was even obliged to dress herself before them, and they asked for her pockets, taking away the trifles they contained. She embraced me, charging me to keep up my spirits and my courage, to take tender care of my aunt, and obey her as a second mother. She then threw herself into my aunt's arms, and recommended her children to her care; my aunt replied to her in a whisper, and she was then hurried away. In leaving the Temple she struck her head against the wicket, not having stooped low enough.<sup>2</sup> The officers asked whether she had hurt herself. 'No,' she replied, '*nothing can hurt me now.*' "

#### THE LAST MOMENTS OF MARIE ANTOINETTE.

We have already seen what changes had been made in the Temple. Marie Antoinette had been separated from her sister, her daughter, and her son,<sup>3</sup> by virtue of a decree which ordered the trial and exile of the last members of the family of the Bourbons. She had been removed to the Conciergerie, and there alone in a narrow prison she was reduced to what was strictly necessary, like the other prisoners. The imprudence of a devoted friend had rendered her situation still more irksome. Michonnis, a member of the municipality, in whom she had excited a warm

<sup>1</sup> The Conciergerie was originally, as its name implies, the porter's lodge of the ancient Palace of Justice, and became in time a prison, from the custom of confining there persons who had committed trifling offences about the Court.

<sup>2</sup> Mathieu, the gaoler, used to say, "I make Madame Veto and her sister and daughter, proud though they are, salute me; for the door is so low they cannot pass without bowing."

<sup>3</sup> The Queen's separation from her son, for whose sake alone she had consented to endure the burden of existence, was so touching, so heartrending that the very gaolers who witnessed the scene confessed when giving an account of it to the authorities that they could not refrain from tears.—Weber's *Memoirs of Marie Antoinette*.

interest, was desirous of introducing to her a person who, he said, wished to see her out of curiosity. This man, a courageous emigrant, threw to her a carnation, in which was enclosed a slip of very fine paper with these words : “*Your friends are ready*”—false hope, and equally dangerous for her who received and for him who gave it ! Michonnis and the emigrant were detected, and forthwith apprehended ; and the vigilance exercised in regard to the unfortunate prisoner became from that day more rigorous than ever.<sup>1</sup> Gendarmes were to mount guard incessantly at the door of her prison, and they were expressly forbidden to answer anything that she might say to them.

That wretch Hebert, the deputy of Chaumette, and editor of the disgusting paper of *Père Duchêne*, a writer of the party of which Vincent, Ronsin, Varlet, and Leclerc were the leaders—Hebert had made it his particular business to torment the unfortunate remnant of the dethroned family. He asserted that the family of the tyrant ought not to be better treated than any *sans-culotte* family ; and he had caused a resolution to be passed by which the sort of luxury in which the prisoners in the Temple were maintained was to be suppressed. They were no longer to be allowed either poultry or pastry ; they were reduced to one sort of aliment for breakfast, and to soup or broth and a single dish for dinner, to two dishes for supper and half a bottle of wine apiece. Tallow candles were to be furnished instead of wax, pewter instead of silver plate, and delft ware instead of porcelain. The wood and water carriers alone were permitted to enter their room, and that only accompanied by two commissioners. Their

<sup>1</sup> The Queen was lodged in a room called the council chamber, which was considered as the most unwholesome apartment in the Conciergerie on account of its dampness and the bad smells by which it was continually affected. Under pretence of giving her a person to wait upon her they placed near her a spy—a man of a horrible countenance and hollow sepulchral voice. This wretch, whose name was Barassin, was a robber and murderer by profession. Such was the chosen attendant on the Queen of France ! A few days before her trial this wretch was removed and a gendarme placed in her chamber, who watched over her night and day, and from whom she was not separated, even when in bed, but by a ragged curtain. In this melancholy abode Marie Antoinette had no other dress than an old black gown, stockings with holes, which she was forced to mend every day ; and she was entirely destitute of shoes.—*Du Broca.*

food was to be introduced to them by means of a turning box. The numerous establishment was reduced to a cook and an assistant, two men-servants, and a woman-servant to attend to the linen.

As soon as this resolution was passed Hebert had repaired to the Temple and inhumanly taken away from the unfortunate prisoners even the most trifling articles to which they attached a high value. Eighty louis which Madame Elizabeth had in reserve, and which she had received from Madame de Lamballe, were also taken away. No one is more dangerous, more cruel, than the man without acquirements, without education, clothed with a recent authority. If, above all, he possess a base nature, if, like Hebert, who was check-taker at the door of a theatre, and embezzled money out of the receipts, he be destitute of natural morality, and if he leap all at once from the mud of his condition into power, he is as mean as he is atrocious. Such was Hebert in his conduct at the Temple. He did not confine himself to the annoyances which we have mentioned. He and some others conceived the idea of separating the young Prince from his aunt and sister. A shoemaker named Simon and his wife were the instructors to whom it was deemed right to consign him for the purpose of giving him a *sans-culotte* education. Simon and his wife were shut up in the Temple, and, becoming prisoners with the unfortunate child, were directed to bring him up in their own way.<sup>1</sup> Their food was better than that of the Princesses, and they shared the table of the municipal commissioners who were on duty. Simon was permitted to go down, accompanied by

<sup>1</sup> Simon, who was entrusted with the bringing up of the Dauphin, had had the cruelty to leave the poor child absolutely alone. Unexampled barbarity to leave an unhappy and sickly infant eight years old in a great room, locked and bolted in, with no other resource than a broken bell which he never rang, so greatly did he dread the people whom its sound would have brought to him! He preferred wanting everything to the sight of his persecutors. His bed had not been touched for six months, and he had not strength to make it himself; it was alive with bugs, and vermin still more disgusting. His linen and his person were covered with them. For more than a year he had had no change of shirt or stockings; every kind of filth was allowed to accumulate in his room. His window was never opened, and the infectious smell of this horrid apartment was so dreadful that no one could bear it. He passed his days wholly without occupation. They did not even allow him light in the evening. This situation affected his mind as well as his body; and he fell into a frightful atrophy.—*Duchesse d'Angoulême*.

two commissioners, to the court of the Temple for the purpose of giving him a little exercise.

Hebert conceived the infamous idea of wringing from this boy revelations to criminate his unhappy mother. Whether this wretch imputed to the child false revelations or abused his tender age and his condition to extort from him what admissions soever he pleased, he obtained a revolting deposition ; and as the youth of the Prince did not admit of his being brought before the tribunal Hebert appeared and detailed the infamous particulars which he had himself either dictated or invented.

It was on the 14th of October that Marie Antoinette appeared before her judges. Dragged before the sanguinary tribunal by inexorable revolutionary vengeance, she appeared there without any chance of acquittal, for it was not to obtain her acquittal that the Jacobins had brought her before it. It was necessary, however, to make some charges. Fouquier therefore collected the rumours current among the populace ever since the arrival of the Princess in France, and, in the act of accusation, he charged her with having plundered the exchequer, first for her pleasures, and afterwards in order to transmit money to her brother the Emperor. He insisted on the scenes of the 5th and 6th of October, and on the dinners of the life-guards, alleging that she had at that period framed a plot, which obliged the people to go to Versailles to frustrate it. He afterwards accused her of having governed her husband, interfered in the choice of ministers, conducted the intrigues with the deputies gained by the Court, prepared the journey to Varennes, provoked the war, and transmitted to the enemy's generals all our plans of campaign. He further accused her of having prepared a new conspiracy on the 10th of August, of having on that day caused the people to be fired upon, of having induced her husband to defend himself by taxing him with cowardice ; lastly, of having never ceased to plot and correspond with foreigners since her captivity in the Temple, and of having there treated her young son as King. We here observe how, on the terrible day of long-deferred vengeance, when subjects at length break forth and strike such of their princes as have not deserved the blow, everything is distorted and converted into crime. We see how the profusion and fondness for pleasure, so natural to a young Princess, how her attachment to her

native country, her influence over her husband, her regrets, always more indiscreet in a woman than a man, nay, even her bolder courage, appeared to their inflamed or malignant imaginations.

It was necessary to produce witnesses. Lecointre, deputy of Versailles, who had seen what had passed on the 5th and 6th of October, Hebert, who had frequently visited the Temple, various clerks in the ministerial offices, and several domestic servants of the old Court, were summoned. Admiral d'Estaing, formerly commandant of the guard of Versailles ; Manuel, the ex-procureur of the commune ; Latour-du-Pin, minister at war in 1789 ; the venerable Bailly, who, it was said, had been, with La Fayette, an accomplice in the journey to Varennes ; lastly, Valazé, one of the Girondists destined to the scaffold ; were taken from their prisons and compelled to give evidence.

No precise fact was elicited. Some had seen the Queen in high spirits when the life-guards testified their attachment ; others had seen her vexed and dejected while being conducted to Paris, or brought back from Varennes ; these had been present at splendid festivities which must have cost enormous sums ; those had heard it said in the ministerial offices that the Queen was adverse to the sanction of the decrees. An ancient waiting-woman of the Queen had heard the Duc de Coigny say, in 1788, that the Emperor had already received two hundred millions from France to make war upon the Turks.

The cynical Hebert, being brought before the unfortunate Queen, dared at length to prefer the charges wrung from the young Prince. He said that Charles Capet had given Simon an account of the journey to Varennes, and mentioned La Fayette and Bailly as having co-operated in it. He then added that this boy was addicted to odious and very premature vices for his age ; that he had been surprised by Simon, who, on questioning him, learned that he derived from his mother the vices in which he indulged. Hebert said that it was no doubt the intention of Marie Antoinette, by weakening thus early the physical constitution of her son, to secure to herself the means of ruling him in case he should ever ascend the throne.

The rumours which had been whispered for twenty years by a malicious Court had given the people a most unfavourable

opinion of the morals of the Queen. That audience, however, though wholly Jacobin, was disgusted at the accusations of Hebert.<sup>1</sup> He nevertheless persisted in supporting them.<sup>2</sup> The unhappy mother made no reply. Urged anew to explain herself, she said with extraordinary emotion, "I thought that human nature would excuse me from answering such an imputation, but I appeal from it to the heart of every mother here present." This noble and simple reply affected all who heard it. In the depositions of the witnesses, however, all was not so bitter for Marie Antoinette. The brave d'Estaing, whose enemy she had been, would not say anything to inculpate her, and spoke only of the courage which she had shown on the 5th and 6th of October, and of the noble resolution which she had expressed, to die beside her husband rather than fly. Manuel, in spite of his enmity to the Court during the time of the Legislative Assembly, declared that he could not say anything against the accused. When the venerable Bailly was brought forward, who formerly had so often predicted to the Court the calamities which its imprudence must produce, he appeared painfully affected; and when he was asked if he knew the wife of Capet, "Yes," said he, bowing respectfully, "I have known *Madame*." He declared that he knew nothing, and maintained that the declarations extorted from the young Prince relative to the journey to Varennes were false. In recompense for his deposition he was assailed with outrageous reproaches, from which he might judge what fate would soon be awarded to himself.

In the whole of the evidence there appeared but two serious facts, attested by Latour-du-Pin and Valazé, who deposed to them because they could not help it. Latour-du-Pin declared that

<sup>1</sup> Can there be a more infernal invention than that made against the Queen by Hebert—namely, that she had had an improper intimacy with her own son? He made use of this sublime idea of which he boasted in order to prejudice the women against the Queen, and to prevent her execution from exciting pity. It had, however, no other effect than that of disgusting all parties.—*Prudhomme*.

<sup>2</sup> Hebert did not long survive her in whose sufferings he had taken such an infamous part. He was executed on 26th March 1794. "Hébert," says the *Rapport d'un Détenus dans les Prisons*, "montra jusqu'au bout une extrême faiblesse. Pendant le trajet de la Conciergerie à l'échafaud, le spectacle de son agonie empêcha que l'on prêt être attentif à la contenance de ses compagnons. La dernière nuit dans la prison il a eu des accès de désespoir."

Marie Antoinette had applied to him for an accurate statement of the armies while he was minister at war. Valezé, always cold, but respectful towards misfortune, would not say anything to criminate the accused ; yet he could not help declaring that, as a member of the commission of twenty-four, being charged with his colleagues to examine the papers found at the house of Septeuil, treasurer of the civil list, he had seen bonds for various sums signed Antoinette, which was very natural ; but he added that he had also seen a letter in which the minister requested the King to transmit to the Queen the copy of the plan of campaign which he had in his hands. The most unfavourable construction was immediately put upon these two facts, the application for a statement of the armies, and the communication of the plan of campaign ; and it was concluded that they could not be wanted for any other purpose than to be sent to the enemy ; for it was not supposed that a young Princess should turn her attention, merely for her own satisfaction, to matters of administration and military plans. After these depositions, several others were received respecting the expenses of the Court, the influence of the Queen in public affairs, the scene of the 10th of August, and what had passed in the Temple ; and the most vague rumours and most trivial circumstances, were eagerly caught at as proofs.<sup>1</sup>

Marie Antoinette frequently repeated with presence of mind and firmness that there was no precise fact against her ;<sup>2</sup> that, besides, though the wife of Louis XVI., she was not answerable for any of the acts of his reign. Fouquier nevertheless declared her to be sufficiently convicted ; Chaveau-Lagarde made unavailing efforts to defend her ; and the unfortunate Queen was condemned to suffer the same fate as her husband.

<sup>1</sup> Yet even Robespierre, so inveterate against the King, would have saved the Queen. "Revolutions are very cruel," he said, "They regard neither sex nor age. Ideas are pitiless, but the people should also know how to forgive. If my head were not necessary to the Revolution, there are moments when I would offer that head to the people in exchange for one of those which they demand of us."—Lamartine's *Girondists*, vol. iii. p. 137.

<sup>2</sup> At first the Queen, consulting only her own sense of dignity, had resolved on her trial to make no other reply to the questions of her judges than—"Assassinate me as you have already assassinated my husband!" Afterwards, however, she determined to follow the example of the King, exert herself in her defence, and leave her judges without any excuse or pretext for putting her to death.—Weber's *Memoirs of Marie Antoinette*.

Conveyed back to the Conciergerie, she there passed in tolerable composure the night preceding her execution, and, on the morning of the following day, the 16th of October,<sup>1</sup> she was conducted, amidst a great concourse of the populace, to the fatal spot where, ten months before, Louis XVI. had perished. She listened with calmness to the exhortations of the ecclesiastic who accompanied her, and cast an indifferent look at the people who had so often applauded her beauty and her grace, and who now as warmly applauded her execution. On reaching the foot of the scaffold she perceived the Tuilleries, and appeared to be moved ; but she hastened to ascend the fatal ladder, and gave herself up with courage to the executioner.<sup>2</sup> The infamous wretch exhibited her head to the people, as he was accustomed to do when he had sacrificed an illustrious victim.—Thiers, *French Revolution*, vol. iii. page 225 *et seq.*

#### THE LAST LETTER OF MARIE ANTOINETTE.

On the morning of the Queen's execution she wrote the following letter to Madame Elizabeth, having obtained paper, pen, and ink from her gaoler :—

“This 15th October, at half-past four in the morning.  
“I write to you, my sister, for the last time. I have been

<sup>1</sup> The Queen, after having written and prayed, slept soundly for some hours. On her waking, Bault's daughter dressed her and adjusted her hair with more neatness than on other days. Marie Antoinette wore a white gown, a white handkerchief covered her shoulders, a white cap her hair ; a black ribbon bound this cap round her temples. . . . The cries, the looks, the laughter, the jests of the people overwhelmed her with humiliation ; her colour, changing continually from purple to paleness, betrayed her agitation. . . . On reaching the scaffold she inadvertently trod on the executioner's foot. “Pardon me,” she said courteously. She knelt for an instant and uttered a half-audible prayer ; then rising and glancing towards the towers of the Temple—“Adieu, once again, my children,” she said, “I go to rejoin your father.”—*Lamartine.*

<sup>2</sup> Sorrow had blanched the Queen's once beautiful hair ; but her features and air still commanded the admiration of all who beheld her ; her cheeks, pale and emaciated, were occasionally tinged with a vivid colour at the mention of those she had lost. When led out to execution, she was dressed in white ; she had cut off her hair with her own hands. Placed in a tumbrel, with her arms tied behind her, she was taken by a circuitous route to the Place de la Révolution, and she ascended the scaffold with a firm and dignified step, as if she had been about to take her place on a throne by the side of her husband.—*Lacretelle.*

condemned, not to an ignominious death—that only awaits criminals—but to go and rejoin your brother. Innocent as he, I hope to show the same firmness as he did in his last moments.<sup>1</sup> I grieve bitterly at leaving my poor children; you know that I existed but for them and you—you who have by your friendship sacrificed all to be with us. In what a position do I leave you! I have learned, by the pleadings on my trial, that my daughter is separated from you. Alas! poor child—I dare not write to her; she would not receive my letter; I know not even if this may reach you. Receive my blessing for both. I hope one day, when they are older, they may rejoin you, and rejoice in liberty at your tender care. May they both think on what I have never ceased to inspire them with! May their friendship and mutual confidence form their happiness! May my daughter feel that at her age she ought always to aid her brother with that advice with which the greater experience she possesses, and her friendship, should inspire her! May my son, on his part, render to his sister every care and service which affection can dictate! May they, in short, both feel, in whatever position they may find themselves, that they can never be truly happy but by their union! Let them take example by us. How much consolation has our friendship given us in our misfortunes! and in happiness to share it with a friend is doubly sweet. Where can one find any more tender or dearer than in one's own family? Let my son never forget the last words of his father. I repeat them to him expressly: '*Let him never attempt to avenge our death.*' I must now speak to you of a matter most painful to my heart. I know how much trouble this child must have given you. Pardon him, my dear sister; think of his age, and how easy it is to make a child say what one wishes, and what he even does not comprehend. A day will arrive, I hope, when he will the better feel all

<sup>1</sup> Since the King's captivity all the defects of his youth had gradually disappeared; the somewhat rough *bonhomie* of his character was changed into grace and sensibility towards those who were about him. His *brusquerie* was no longer perceptible, and all the trifling blemishes in his character were effaced by the grandeur of his resignation. His children adored, his sister admired him, while the Queen was astonished at his tenderness and courage. His very gaolers could not recognise the vulgar and sensual man public prejudice had described to them.—*Lamartine.*

the value of your kindness and affection for them both. It still remains to me to confide to you my last thoughts. I had desired to write them from the commencement of the trial; but, exclusively of their not permitting me to write, the proceedings have been so rapid that I should really not have had the time. I die in the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion; in that of my fathers; in that in which I have been bred, and which I have always professed, having no spiritual consolation to expect, not knowing if priests of this religion still exist here—and even the place in which I am would expose them too much, were they once to enter it. I sincerely ask pardon of God for all the errors I may have committed during my life. I hope that in His kindness He will accept my last vows, as well as those I have long since made, that He may vouchsafe to receive my soul in His mercy and goodness. I ask pardon of all those with whom I am acquainted, and of you, my sister, in particular, for all the trouble which, without desiring it, I may have caused you. I forgive all my enemies the evil they have done me. I say here adieu to my aunts and to all my brothers and sisters. I had friends, and the idea of being separated for ever from them and their sorrows causes me the greatest regret I experience in dying. Let them, at least, know that in my last moments I have thought of them. Adieu, my good and kind sister! May this letter reach you! Think of me always! I embrace you with all my heart, as well as those poor dear children. My God, how heartrending it is to quit them for ever! Adieu! . . . Adieu! . . . I ought no longer to occupy myself but with my spiritual duties. As I am not mistress of my actions, they may bring me perhaps a priest. But I here protest that I will not tell him one word, and that I will treat him absolutely as a stranger."

When the letter was finished the Queen kissed each page repeatedly, then folded without sealing it, and gave it to the concierge Bault. Her presentiment that it would never reach those to whom it would have afforded a melancholy consolation was fulfilled. Bault remitted it to Fouquier-Tinville, and it was ultimately found among the papers of Couthon, to whom Fouquier-Tinville had transmitted many reliques of royalty.—See Lamartine's *History of the Girondists*, edit. 1864, vol. iii. pp. 153-4.

THE LAST SEPARATION—EXECUTION OF MADAME ELIZABETH—  
DEATH OF THE DAUPHIN.

The two Princesses left in the Temple were now almost inconsolable ; they spent days and nights in tears, whose only alleviation was that they were shed together. “The company of my aunt whom I loved so tenderly,” says Madame Royale, “was a great comfort to me. But alas ! all that I loved was perishing around me, and I was soon to lose her also. . . . In the beginning of September I had an illness caused solely by my anxiety about my mother ; I never heard a drum beat that I did not expect another 2d of September.”<sup>1</sup> In the course of the month the rigour of their captivity was much increased. The Commune ordered that they should only have one room ; that Tison (who had done the heaviest of the household work for them, and since the kindness they showed to his insane wife had occasionally given them tidings of the Dauphin) should be imprisoned in the turret ; that they should only be supplied with the barest necessaries ; and that no one should enter their room save to carry water and firewood. Their quantity of firing was reduced, and they were not allowed candles. They were also forbidden to go on the leads, and their large sheets were taken away, “lest”—notwithstanding the gratings!—“they should escape from the windows.” Madame Royale heard that attempts were made to save the life of the Queen, and she observes that they did not surprise her, for “all honest men took an interest in her fate, and, with the exception of vile and ferocious wretches, who were, alas ! too numerous, every one who was permitted to speak to her, to approach her or to see her, was touched with pity and respect, so well did her affability temper the dignity of her manners.”

On 8th October 1793 Madame Royale was ordered to go downstairs that she might be interrogated by some municipal officers. “My aunt, who was greatly affected, would have followed, but they stopped her. She asked whether I should be

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable that Madame Royale must have been thinking of 3d September 1792, when the head of the Princesse de Lamballe was carried to the Temple.

permitted to come up again ; Chaumette assured her that I should. ‘ You may trust,’ said he, ‘ the word of an honest republican. She shall return.’ I soon found myself in my brother’s room, whom I embraced tenderly ; but we were torn asunder, and I was obliged to go into another room.<sup>1</sup> . . . Chaumette then questioned me about a thousand shocking things of which they accused my mother and aunt ; I was so indignant at hearing such horrors that, terrified as I was, I could not help exclaiming that they were infamous falsehoods. But in spite of my tears they still pressed their questions. There were some things which I did not comprehend, but of which I understood enough to make me weep with indignation and horror. . . . They then asked me about Varennes, and other things. I answered as well as I could without implicating anybody. I had always heard my parents say that it were better to die than to implicate anybody.” When the examination was over the Princess begged to be allowed to join her mother, but Chaumette said he could not obtain permission for her to do so. She was then cautioned to say nothing about her examination to her aunt, who was next to appear before them. Madame Elizabeth, her niece declares, “ replied with still more contempt to their shocking questions.”

The only intimation of the Queen’s fate which her daughter and her sister-in-law were allowed to receive was through hearing her sentence cried by the newsman. But, “ we could not persuade ourselves that she was dead,” writes Madame Royale. “ A hope, so natural to the unfortunate, persuaded us that she must have been saved. For eighteen months I remained in this cruel suspense. We learnt also by the cries of the newsman the death of the Duc d’Orléans.<sup>2</sup> It was the only piece of news that reached

<sup>1</sup> This was the last time the brother and sister met.

<sup>2</sup> The Duc d’Orléans, the early and interested propagator of the Revolution, was its next victim. Billaud Varennes said in the Convention, “ The time has come when all the conspirators should be known and struck. I demand that we no longer pass over in silence a man whom we seem to have forgotten, despite the numerous facts against him. I demand that D’Orléans be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal.” The Convention, once his hireling adulators, unanimously supported the proposal. In vain he alleged his having been accessory to the disorders of 5th October, his support of the revolt on 10th August 1792, his vote against the King on 17th January 1793. His con-

us during the whole winter." The severity with which the prisoners were treated was carried into every detail of their life. The officers who guarded them took away their chessmen and cards because some of them were named kings and queens, and all the books with coats of arms on them ; they refused to get ointment for a gathering on Madame Elizabeth's arm ; they would not allow her to make a herb-tea which she thought would strengthen her niece ; they declined to supply fish or eggs on fast days or during Lent, bringing only coarse fat meat, and brutally replying to all remonstrances, " None but fools believe in that stuff nowadays." Madame Elizabeth never made the officials another request, but reserved some of the bread and *café-au-lait* from her breakfast for her second meal.<sup>1</sup> The time during which she could be thus tormented was growing short.

On 9th May 1794, as the Princesses were going to bed, the outside bolts of the door were unfastened and a loud knocking was heard. " When my aunt was dressed," says Madame Royale, " she opened the door, and they said to her, ' *Citoyenne*, come down.' — ' And my niece ? ' — ' We shall take care of her afterwards.' She embraced me, and to calm my agitation promised to return. ' No, *citizen*, ' said the men, ' bring your bonnet, you shall not return.' They overwhelmed her with abuse, but she bore it patiently, embracing me, and exhorting me to trust in Heaven, and never to forget the last commands of my father and mother."

Madame Elizabeth was then taken to the Conciergerie, where she was interrogated by the vice-president at midnight,<sup>2</sup> and then allowed to take some hours' rest on the bed on which Marie Antoinette had slept for the last time. In the morning she was

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demise was pronounced. He then asked only for a delay of twenty-four hours, and had a repast carefully prepared, on which he feasted with avidity. When led out for execution he gazed with a smile on the Palais Royal, the scene of his former orgies. He was detained for a quarter of an hour before that palace by the order of Robespierre, who had asked his daughter's hand, and promised in return to excite a tumult in which the Duke's life should be saved. Depraved though he was, he would not consent to such a sacrifice, and he met his fate with stoical fortitude.—*Alison*, vol. iii. p. 172.

<sup>1</sup> Duchesse d'Angoulême, *Royal Memoirs*, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> " It has been said," Lamartine observes, " that the day did not contain sufficient hours for the impatience of the tribunal."

brought before the tribunal, with twenty-four other prisoners, of varying ages and both sexes, some of whom had once been frequently seen at Court. "Of what has Elizabeth to complain?" Fouquier-Tinville satirically asked; "at the foot of the guillotine, surrounded by faithful nobility, she may imagine herself again at Versailles." "You call my brother a tyrant," the Princess replied to her accuser, "if he had been what you say, you would not be where you are, nor I before you!" She was sentenced to death, and showed neither surprise nor grief. "I am ready to die," she said, "happy at the prospect of rejoining in a better world those whom I loved on earth."<sup>1</sup> On being taken to the room where those condemned to suffer at the same time as herself were assembled, she spoke to them with so much piety and resignation that they were encouraged by her example to show calmness and resignation like her own. The women, on leaving the cart, begged to embrace her, and she said some words of comfort to each in turn as they mounted the scaffold, which she was not allowed to ascend till all her companions had been executed before her eyes.<sup>2</sup>

"It is impossible to imagine my distress at finding myself separated from my aunt," says Madame Royale. "Since I had been able to appreciate her merits, I saw in her nothing but

<sup>1</sup> Duchesse d'Angoulême, *Royal Memoirs*, p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> Madame Elizabeth was one of those rare personages only seen at distant intervals during the course of ages; she set an example of steadfast piety in the palace of kings, she lived amid her family the favourite of all and the admiration of the world. . . . When I went to Versailles Madame Elizabeth was twenty-two years of age. Her plump figure and pretty pink colour must have attracted notice, and her air of calmness and contentment even more than her beauty. She was fond of billiards, and her elegance and courage in riding were remarkable. But she never allowed these amusements to interfere with her religious observances. At that time her wish to take the veil at Saint Cyr was much talked of, but the King was too fond of his sister to endure the separation. There were also rumours of a marriage between Madame Elizabeth and the Emperor Joseph. The Queen was sincerely attached to her brother, and loved her sister-in-law most tenderly; she ardently desired this marriage as a means of raising the Princess to one of the first thrones in Europe, and as a possible means of turning the Emperor from his innovations. She had been very carefully educated, had talent in music and painting, spoke Italian and a little Latin, and understood mathematics. . . . Her last moments were worthy of her courage and virtue.—D'Hézecques' *Recollections*, pp. 72-75.

religion, gentleness, meekness, modesty, and a devoted attachment to her family ; she sacrificed her life for them, since nothing could persuade her to leave the King and Queen. I never can be sufficiently grateful to her for her goodness to me, which ended only with her life. She looked on me as her child, and I honoured and loved her as a second mother. I was thought to be very like her in countenance, and I feel conscious that I have something of her character.<sup>1</sup> Would to God I might imitate her virtues, and hope that I may hereafter deserve to meet her, as well as my dear parents, in the bosom of our Creator, where I cannot doubt that they enjoy the reward of their virtuous lives and meritorious deaths." Madame Royale vainly begged to be allowed to rejoin her mother or her aunt, or at least to know their fate. The municipal officers would tell her nothing, and rudely refused her request to have a woman placed with her. "I asked nothing but what seemed indispensable, though it was often harshly refused," she says. "But I at least could keep myself clean. I had soap and water, and carefully swept out my room every day. I had no light, but in the long days I did not feel this privation much. . . . I had some religious works and travels, which I had read over and over. I had also some knitting, *qui m'ennuyait beaucoup*." Once, she believes, Robespierre visited her prison :<sup>2</sup> "The officers showed him great respect ; the people in the Tower did not know him, or at least would not tell me who he was. He stared insolently at me, glanced at my books, and, after joining the municipal officers in a search, retired."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pensive as her father, proud as her mother, pious as her aunt, Madame Royale's mind bore the impress of the three minds amidst which it had been nurtured. Hers was a shadowy, pale, ideal beauty. Never quitting the side of her mother or her aunt, she seemed to shrink from life. Her light hair, still hanging over her shoulders, almost concealed her features ; her expression was timid and reserved.—*Lamartine*.

<sup>2</sup> It has been said that Robespierre vainly tried to obtain the hand of Mademoiselle d'Orléans. It was also rumoured that Madame Royale herself owed her life to his matrimonial ambition. "Dans ces tems cette jeune infortunée n'avait du son salut qu'à l'ambition de Robespierre. Et si sous la règne de la Terreur elle n'avait point suivie sa famille à l'échafaud, c'est que ce monstre avait des vues sur elle, et se promettait de l'épouser pour affermir sa puissance."

—*Deux Amis*, xiv. 173.

<sup>3</sup> On another occasion "three men in scarves," who entered the Princess'

When Laurent was appointed by the Convention to the charge of the young prisoners, Madame Royale was treated with more consideration. "He was always courteous," she says; he restored her tinder-box, gave her fresh books, and allowed her candles and as much firewood as she wanted, "which pleased me greatly." This simple expression of relief gives a clearer idea of what the delicate girl must have suffered than a volume of complaints.

But however hard Madame Royale's lot might be, that of the Dauphin was infinitely harder. Though only eight years old when he entered the Temple, he was by nature and education extremely precocious, "his memory retained everything, and his sensitiveness comprehended everything." His features "recalled the somewhat effeminate look of Louis XV., and the Austrian hauteur of Maria Theresa; his blue eyes, aquiline nose, elevated nostrils, well-defined mouth, pouting lips, chestnut hair parted in the middle and falling in thick curls on his shoulders, resembled his mother before her years of tears and torture. All the beauty of his race, by both descents, seemed to reappear in him."<sup>1</sup> For some time the care of his parents preserved his health and cheerfulness even in the Temple; but his constitution was weakened by the fever recorded by his sister, and his jailors were determined that he should never regain strength. "What does the Convention intend to do with him?" asked Simon when the innocent victim was placed in his clutches. "Transport him?"—"No."—"Kill him?"—"No."—"Poison him?"—"No."—"What then?"—"Why, get rid of him." For such a purpose they could not have chosen their instruments better. "Simon and his wife cut off all those fair locks that had been his youthful glory and his mother's pride. This worthy pair stripped him of the mourning he wore for his father; and as they did so they called it 'playing at the game of the spoiled

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room, told her that they did not see why she should wish to be released, as she seemed very comfortable! "'It is dreadful,' I replied, 'to be separated for more than a year from one's mother, without even hearing what has become of her or of my aunt.'—'You are not ill?'—'No, sir, but the cruellest illness is that of the heart.'—'We can do nothing for you. Be patient, and submit to the justice and goodness of the French people.' I had nothing more to say."—Duchesse d'Angoulême, *Royal Memoirs*, p. 273.

<sup>1</sup> Lamartine.

king.' They alternately induced him to commit excesses, and then half starved him. They beat him mercilessly; nor was the treatment by night less brutal than that by day. As soon as the weary boy had sunk into his first profound sleep, they would loudly call him by name, 'Capet, Capet.' Startled, nervous, bathed in perspiration, or sometimes trembling with cold, he would spring up, rush through the dark, and present himself at Simon's bedside, murmuring tremblingly, 'I am here, citizen.' 'Come nearer; let me feel you.' He would approach the bed as he was ordered, although he knew the treatment that awaited him. Simon would buffet him on the head, or kick him away, adding the remark, 'Get to bed again, wolf's cub; I only wanted to know that you were safe.' On one of these occasions, when the child had fallen half stunned upon his own miserable couch, and lay there groaning and faint with pain, Simon roared out with a laugh, 'Suppose you were king, Capet, what would you do to me?' The child thought of his father's dying words, and said, 'I would forgive you.'<sup>1</sup> The change in the young Prince's mode of life and the cruelties and caprices to which he was subjected soon made him fall ill, says his sister. "Simon forced him to eat to excess, and to drink large quantities of wine, which he detested. . . . He grew extremely fat without increasing in height or strength." His aunt and sister, deprived of the pleasure of tending him, had the pain of hearing his childish voice raised in the abominable songs his gaolers taught him. The brutality of Simon "depraved at once the body and soul of his pupil. He called him the young wolf of the Temple. He treated him as the young of wild animals are treated when taken from the mother and reduced to captivity—at once intimidated by blows and enervated by taming. He punished for sensibility; he rewarded meanness; he encouraged vice; he made the child wait on him at table, sometimes striking him on the face with a knotted towel, sometimes raising the poker and threatening to strike him with it."<sup>2</sup>

Yet when Simon was removed<sup>3</sup> the poor young Prince's con-

<sup>1</sup> Thiers.

<sup>2</sup> Lamartine.

<sup>3</sup> Simon left the Temple to become a municipal officer. He was involved in the overthrow of Robespierre, and guillotined the day after him, 29th July 1794.

dition became even worse. His horrible loneliness induced an apathetic stupor to which any suffering would have been preferable. "He passed his days without any kind of occupation; they did not allow him light in the evening. His keepers never approached him but to give him food;" and on the rare occasions when they took him to the platform of the Tower he was unable or unwilling to move about. When, in November 1794, a commissary named Gomin arrived at the Temple, disposed to treat the little prisoner with kindness, it was too late. "He took extreme care of my brother," says Madame Royale. "For a long time the unhappy child had been shut up in darkness, and he was dying of fright. He was very grateful for the attentions of Gomin, and became much attached to him." But his physical condition was alarming, and owing to Gomin's representations a commission was instituted to examine him. "The commissioners appointed were Harmond, Mathieu, and Reverchon, who visited 'Louis Charles,' as he was now called, in the month of February 1795. They found the young Prince seated at a square deal table, at which he was playing with some dirty cards, making card houses and the like,—the materials having been furnished him, probably, that they might figure in the report as evidences of indulgence. He did not look up from the table as the commissioners entered. He was in a slate-coloured dress, bare headed; the room was reported as clean, the bed in good condition, the linen fresh; his clothes were also reported as new; but, in spite of all these assertions, it is well known that his bed had not been made for months, that he had not left his room, nor was permitted to leave it for any purpose whatever, that it was consequently uninhabitable, and that he was covered with vermin and with sores. The swellings at his knees alone were sufficient to disable him from walking. One of the commissioners approached the young Prince respectfully. The latter did not raise his head. Harmond in a kind voice begged him to speak to them. The eyes of the boy remained fixed on the table before him. They told him of the kindly intentions of the Government, of their hopes that he would yet be happy, and their desire that he would speak unreservedly to the medical man that was to visit him. He seemed to listen with profound attention, but not a single word passed his lips. It was an heroic principle that

impelled that poor young heart to maintain the silence of a mute in presence of these men. He remembered too well the days when three other commissioners waited on him, regaled him with pastry and wine, and obtained from him that hellish accusation against the mother that he loved. He had learnt by some means the import of the act, so far as it was an injury to his mother. He now dreaded seeing again three commissioners, hearing again kind words, and being treated again with fine promises. Dumb as death itself he sat before them, and remained motionless as stone, and as mute.”<sup>1</sup>

His disease now made rapid progress, and Gomin and Lasne, superintendents of the Temple, thinking it necessary to inform the Government of the melancholy condition of their prisoner, wrote on the register : “ Little Capet is unwell.” No notice was taken of this account, which was renewed next day in more urgent terms : “ Little Capet is dangerously ill.” Still there was no word from beyond the walls. “ We must knock harder,” said the keepers to each other, and they added, “ It is feared he will not live,” to the words “ dangerously ill.” At length on Wednesday, 6th May 1795, three days after the first report, the authorities appointed M. Desault to give the invalid the assistance of his art. After having written down his name on the register he was admitted to see the Prince. He made a long and very attentive examination of the unfortunate child, asked him many questions without being able to obtain an answer, and contented himself with prescribing a decoction of hops, to be taken by spoonfuls every half hour, from six o’clock in the morning till eight in the evening. On the first day the Prince steadily refused to take it. In vain Gomin several times drank off a glass of the potion in his presence ; his example proved as ineffectual as his words. Next day Lasne renewed his solicitations. “ Monsieur knows very well that I desire nothing but the good of his health, and he distresses me deeply by thus refusing to take what might contribute to it. I entreat him as a favour not to give me this cause of grief.” And as Lasne, while speaking, began to taste the potion in a glass, the child took what he offered him out of his hands. “ You have, then, taken an oath that I should drink

<sup>1</sup> Thiers.

it," said he firmly; "well, give it me, I *will* drink it." From that moment he conformed with docility to whatever was required of him, but the policy of the Commune had attained its object; help had been withheld till it was almost a mockery to supply it. The Prince's weakness was excessive, his keepers could scarcely drag him to the top of the Tower; walking hurt his tender feet, and at every step he stopped to press the arm of Lasne with both hands upon his breast. At last he suffered so much that it was no longer possible for him to walk, and his keeper carried him about, sometimes on the platform, and sometimes in the little tower, where the royal family had lived at first. But the slight improvement to his health occasioned by the change of air scarcely compensated for the pain which his fatigue gave him. On the battlement of the platform nearest the left turret the rain had, by perseverance through ages, hollowed out a kind of basin. The water that fell remained there for several days; and as, during the spring of 1795, storms were of frequent occurrence, this little sheet of water was kept constantly supplied. Whenever the child was brought out upon the platform he saw a little troop of sparrows, which used to come to drink and bathe in this reservoir. At first they flew away at his approach, but from being accustomed to see him walking quietly there every day, they at last grew more familiar, and did not spread their wings for flight till he came up close to them. They were always the same, he knew them by sight, and perhaps like himself they were inhabitants of that ancient pile. He called them *his* birds; and his first action, when the door into the terrace was opened, was to look towards that side,—and the sparrows were always there. He delighted in their chirping, and he must have envied them their wings!

Though so little could be done to alleviate his sufferings, a moral improvement was taking place in him. He was touched by the lively interest displayed by his physician, who never failed to visit him at nine o'clock every morning. He seemed pleased with the attention paid him, and ended by placing entire confidence in M. Desault. Gratitude loosened his tongue; brutality and insult had failed to extort a murmur, but kind treatment restored his speech: he had no words for anger, but he found them to express his thanks. M. Desault prolonged his visits as